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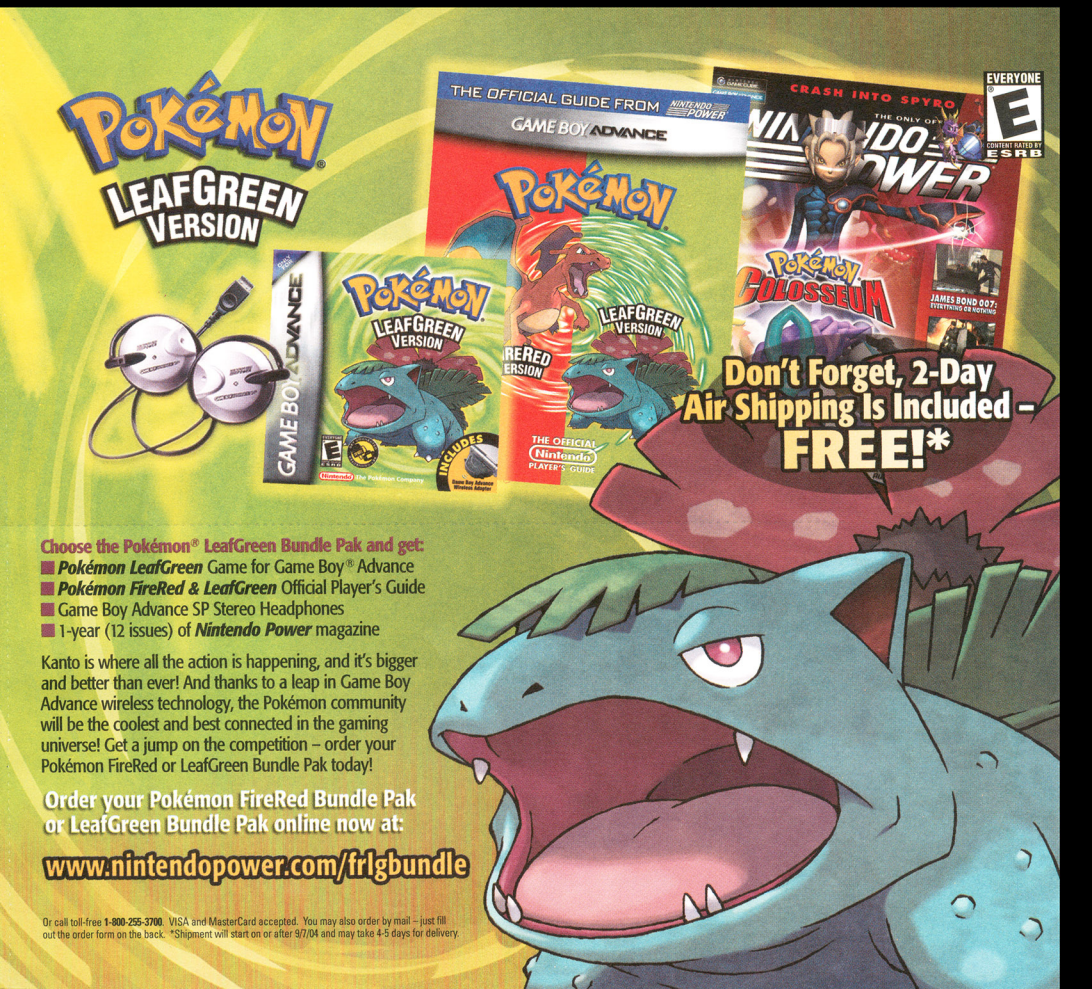

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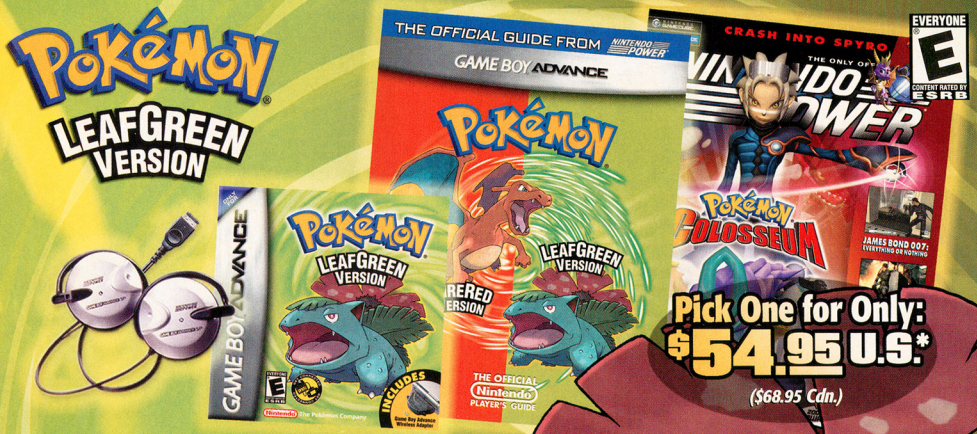

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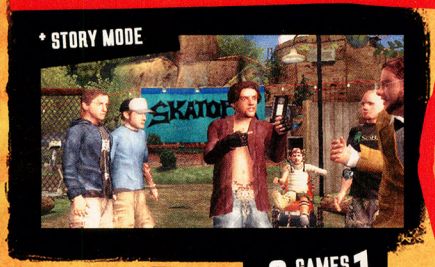

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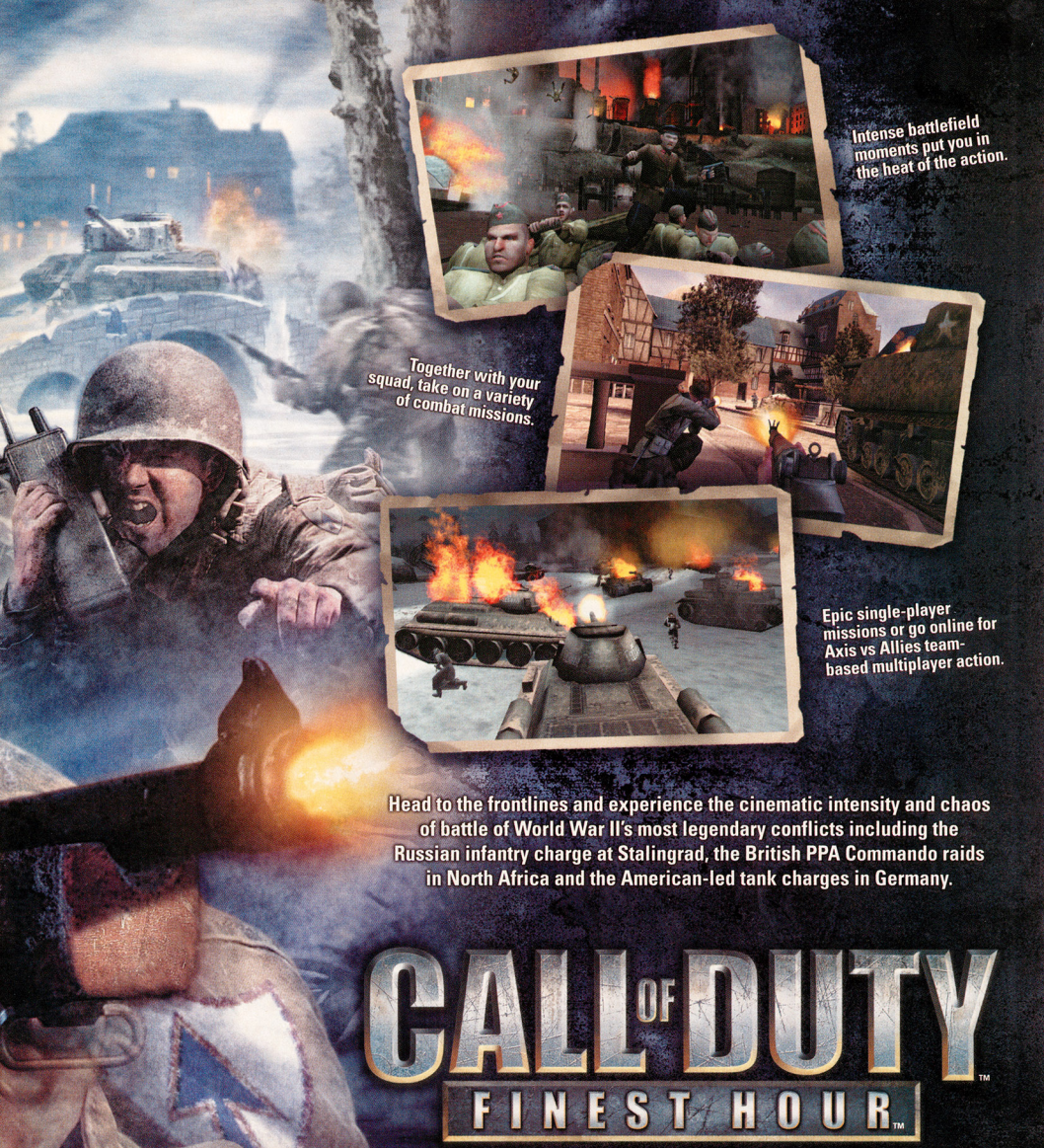

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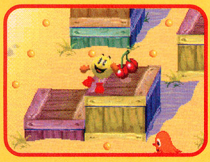

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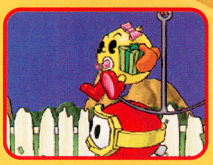

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80 Those funky neon lights can't save you now. Although they do make me want to boogie down.

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PUBLISHER
T. KIMISHIMA

EDITOR IN CHIEF
YOSHIO TSUBOIKE

MANAGING EDITOR
SCOTT PELLAND

SUPERVISING EDITOR
JESSICA JOFFE STEIN

SENIOR EDITOR
GEORGE SINFIELD

SENIOR WRITERS
ALAN AVERILL
STEVEN GRIMM

STAFF WRITERS
JESSICA FOLSOM
STEVE THOMASON

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
ANDY MYERS
CHRISTOPHER SHEPPERD
BOBBY STEIN

EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS
REGGIE FILS-AIME
GEORGE HARRISON
DAN OWSEN
JACQUALEE STORY
JUANA TINGDALE

COPY EDITOR
CANDACE ENGLISH

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER
MACHIKO OEHLER

SENIOR PRODUCTION SPECIALIST
CORINNE AGBUNAG

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
MAYUMI COLSON

ART DIRECTOR
KIM LOGAN

DESIGN LEAD
JIM CATECHI

SENIOR DESIGNER
TIM GARRET

DESIGNERS
CORY CONNER
REBEKAH LANE
DAVID WATERWORTH

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
CHRISTOPHER SHEPPERD

ELECTRONIC PREPRESS ASSISTANT
JESSIE SCHUTZENHOFER

DESIGN, GAME STRATEGY & ILLUSTRATION
V-DESIGN INC.

V-DESIGN INC. ART DIRECTOR
YOSHI ORIMO

V-DESIGN INC.
DEANNA BAKER
ADAM CROWELL
OLIVER CROWELL
MATT FISHER
BRIAN JONES
SONJA MORRIS
JOHN RICE
JILL STORY

COVER DESIGN
GRIFFES ADVERTISING

SALES AND MARKETING MANAGER
JEFF BAFUS

SALES AND MARKETING ASSISTANT MANAGER
MALINDA MILLER

FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES, CONTACT
NP.ADVERTISING@NOA.NINTENDO.COM

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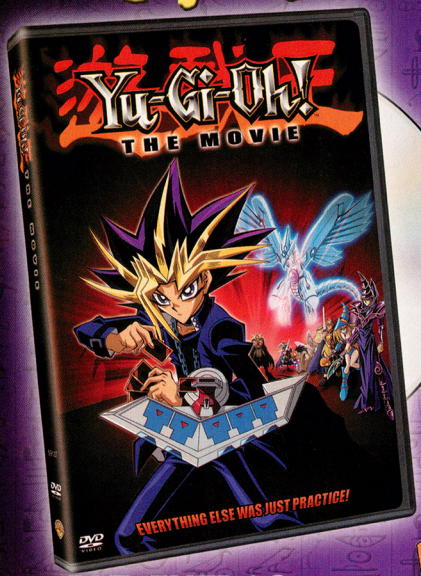

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Feedback, correspondence and pitying fools

Letter of the Month

Recently I've been considering the things I've read about the next Nintendo console coming out. Nintendo has stated that they are going the extra mile to make this a new experience in gaming. In other words, they are not simply going to give the system better graphics and more memory as [Sony and Microsoft will with] the PS3 and the next Xbox. When I first read this, it scared me because I was afraid Nintendo might do themselves in by making something too different. After considering it, however, I am now confident that Nintendo will bring us an amazing new home console experience.

I came to this conclusion by considering what Nintendo has done in the past by taking risks like this. They created the original Nintendo [Entertainment System] when video games had basically died after the Atari—I'm sure it seemed crazy at the time to be making a new video game system. They made the first handheld system. And, above all else in my eyes, they made Super Mario 64, meaning they basically created true 3-D games where you could go anywhere in an amazing 3-D world. At this point in gaming, Mario 64 might not seem like much, but for those of us who have lived through the gaming generations, we remeber playing it for the first time, and experiencing a whole new kind of game.

Looking back on what Nintendo has done convinces me that they will give the gaming world something incredible, and I can't wait.

John H.
via the Internet

Girl Power

I was reading [Volume 185] and noticed that the main character designer for Baten Kaitos is a woman. I got so excited because that is exactly what I want to do.

Kathryn L.
via the Internet

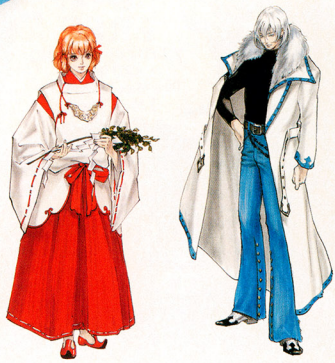
Women are playing an increasingly prominent role in game development, particularly in the areas of art direction and character design. Ayami Kojima, for example, is responsible for the stunning artwork in recent Castlevania games.

Beyond Hits & Misses

I would like to agree and disagree with NessMaster2044 in issue 185—some games [with a familiar] title do sell like crazy even if they stink. But I think he's putting them down a bit too hard. I have Beyond Good & Evil and I love it. I also have games like Dragon Ball Z: Budokai, and I like that game too. It seems to me that he's focusing on the negative and not on the positive. There are a lot of players out there that buy both types of games, not just one or the other. I mean, sometimes it's not their fault. I live with my grandparents and they don't exactly know much about games, so on Christmas or my birthday, they just get me a game that they know the title to (like The Lord of the Rings). I do think that he made a good point, but he didn't really look at some of the reasons.

Hope H.
Maryland

You make some interesting arguments, Hope. Certainly not all licensed games are bad (Lord of the Rings is a good example), and the ones that are often sell well as a result of unsuspecting nongamers purchasing them as gifts. When a holiday approaches, it never hurts to drop your loved ones a few hints. To let our friends and family know how much we want WWE: Day of Reckoning, for example, we've been hitting them with steel folding chairs whenever the opportunity presents itself.



Troopa Sighting

I (and some other Nsiders) just discovered the greatest cameo appearance in Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door! After you beat Chapter 6, you'll receive an e-mail from Zip Toad, and if you squint really hard, you'll see Jr. Troopa flying outside the window!

Stephen F.
via the Internet

Keen eye, Stephen. And here we thought we'd seen the last of that troublesome Koopa.

Money woes

I need help! I won't ever get enough money to buy a Nintendo DS, Echoes, Donkey Konga, The Third Age, Metroid Prime: Hunters and all of the other great DS and GameCube games [coming out]. What can I do? Please give me an answer!

sportsbreak2225
via the Internet

We feel your pain. In order to afford all of the great games coming out in the next few months, the NP Krew is planning a bank heist. We're still looking for a wheelman, if you're interested.

Wireless wonderings

I have some questions about the WiFi capabilities of the DS. My brother told me that it will require a wireless router. Is this true? I also want to know if it will cost money to play [games] over WiFi.

ess62
via the Internet

The Nintendo DS features two kinds of wireless gameplay. Many of the early titles use local wireless connectivity that allows you to play with friends from a range of up to 65 feet without any additional costs or equipment (aside from the games and the systems themselves). Should future titles take advantage of the system's Interenet capabilities, you'll need to connect at a WiFi hot spot.

I was reading your article about the Nintendo DS and I was wondering if I could use the wireless link-up in planes.

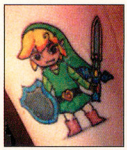
Mitchell D
via the Internet

According to Lance Barr, Director of Product Design at Nintendo of America, "In the manual we warn the consumer to not use the wireless feature of the DS in certain locations: 'WARNING—Radio Frequency Interference: Observe and follow all regulations and rules regarding use of wireless devices in locations such as hospitals, airports and on board aircraft. Operation in those locations may interfere with or cause malfunctions of equipment, with resulting injuries to persons or damage to property.'

"Generally, the airlines will let the consumer know when and where they can use electronic devices—that typically includes PDAs, etc. that have similar wireless modes to that of the DS. When these electronic devices are allowed to be used, then the DS can be used also."

Ink to the past

I have four tattoos, two of which [depict] creations of Shigeru Miyamoto. On my right forearm I have Link, and on my left forearm I have Zelda, both in the Wind Waker style. I know there are people out there who say, "You're going to regret having a video game character on you!" But the fact is, I won't. I have played every The Legend of Zelda game since I could hold a controller. I've played (and own) every Zelda game, and I know the whole mythology behind it. To me, and many others, the Legend of Zelda series is much more than just a game, it's an indescribable feeling. The series has made a big impact on not only me and my life, but on gaming history. I think of my tattoos as a tribute to Mr. Miyamoto and to all that is great in the gaming world.



Antoinette G.
via the Internet

That's some impressive ink, Antoinette. But if you were a true fan, you'd get this image of Link from the obscure CD-i game Zelda: The Wand of Gamelon tattooed on your tush.

Prime numbers

I can't wait for Metroid Prime 2 Echoes. It looks like it will be great. I know that it has a multiplayer feature, but my question is, does the multiplayer have bots that you can play with, or do you play only against your human friends?

Andrew F.
via the Internet

There are no bots, unfortunately, but the multiplayer mode is a blast with two or three friends. It's caused productivity at the NP offices to grind to a halt on more than one occasion.

Book Learnin'

I'm writing in response to Kennan T.'s letter in issue 186. I, too, am a huge fan of Tales of Symphonia (like many), and I've taken my love of the game and curiosity one step further by researching possible ties between ToS and mythology. I've been working on the project for a while and share my finds with other fans via the Internet with The Angelus Project (http://antimind.zhrodague.net/videogames/tales/tos/index.html). I think there's more than just Norse and Greek influences involved—I've found possible ties with other mythologies and folklore as well.

I feel that the ties between mythologies and video games are so interesting that I've [checked out] quite a few books on the matter from the library. I hope that others have enough curiosity to lead them to read up on the subject a little or at least read books on the history of video games.

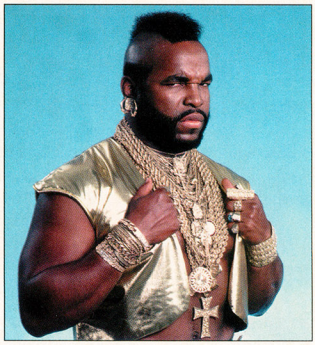
Laurel M.
via the Internet

Yoshi story

I'm confused. Some of the screenshots you showed [in your Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door preview] pictured an orange Yoshi with a blue mohawk. Mine is green with an orange mohawk. Why is yours different?

PowerBishop882
via the Internet

Some aspects of the mini-Yoshi's appearance are random, including his mohawk and attire. When we played through the game a second time, our mini-Yoshi looked like this:



Retro suggestions

I've always thought that a retro section would be an awesome addition to your magazine. You should highlight one game a month. Tell us why you choose the games you do, and what really makes them classics. Give a review, some strate-

gies and codes. And don't confine yourselves to the major consoles, either. I'd love to see a couple of Virtual Boy reviews, for instance. You should really highlight some old gaming peripherals, too, like the Power Glove, Super Scope, etc. I, for one, absolutely love that kind of thing.

Gollum
via the Internet

I'd love to see a retro section in NP. Not just because of the recent Classic NES Series, but because of all the history behind Nintendo's games. A retro section could not only entertain, but educate readers. They could learn about some of the best classic games like the Contra series, Tecmo Bowl, Punch-Out!!, Star Tropics and Earthbound. In addition, gamers could learn about the roots of some of their current favorites, like Final Fantasy, F-Zero and Metal Gear Solid.

Skipdx00.
via the Internet

The letters continue to pour in regarding the inclusion of a retro section in the magazine. It's definitely something we're going to consider for future issues, so keep sending us your ideas.

Thank you

Dear Nintendo Power crew and all of Nintendo,

My older brother died in the hospital earlier this October. He and I both subscribed to Nintendo Power and played video games with each other. This was one of our bonds as brothers, and I would like to thank Nintendo, Konami, Sega, Atari and so many other companies that put so much soul and care into their games and systems so that friends and family had one more special way to show their love for each other. Gaming allowed my brother and I to spend valuable time together, and through it, he taught me important lessons: stay strong, take responsibilty for your actions and never give up.

Thanks again, all you great designers and everyone else in the video game industry, including Mario, Luigi, Simon, Carrie, Reinhardt, Samus, Link and Zelda.

In loving memory of big brother Ben (aka Mario), from li'l bro Alex (aka Luigi).

Alex W.
via the Internet

Discussion from the Nsider Forums – forums.nintendo.com

Underrated Games

Everyone talks about the hype that some games receive, like Metroid, Zelda and Resident Evil. What do you guys think are the most underrated games?

Aenima38

Custom Robo and Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time—both of those were great games.

Seanster

Freedom Fighters is a very good game.

Anguris

Metal Arms: Glitch in the System.

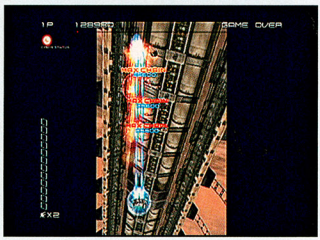
Gamecube__Gamer

I don't know a lot of people that bought Beyond Good & Evil. It was a great game, though.

Dinsfire03

I don't understand why Ikaruga wasn't more successful.

Sena



Point-and-Click Rebirth

Anyone who has played PC games knows of the old adventure titles like Curse of Monkey Island, Grim Fandango, Sam and Max, etc. Lately they've been dead. Like, really dead. Yet I believe the touch screen of the DS is perfect for the old point-and-click games. I'd love to see some new games [like that] appear on the system. How awesome would it be for the entire genre to have a new life on the DS?

Frogbro3000

Wow! I forgot about this type of gaming completely. I guess the DS could pull it off. The interface on the touch pad wouldn't even have to be that complex.

Ltra4

I could easily see that happening. The game Another looks like a point-and-click adventure.

Vega8

Mega Man X: Command Mission Reviews

The classic Mega Man has entered the RPG realm, and he has done it pretty well. The game has some innovative features . . . and the cel-shaded graphics look very nice.

Dryboneszero

Command Mission is an unoriginal RPG that is finished far too quickly with no motivation to keep you going. The battle system is generic and the game is far too easy to the point where collecting any of the bonus items or worrying about customizing your characters becomes completely pointless. The dungeon designs are bland and uninspired, and the music is not memorable in any way. Even if you're a collectibles freak, this game is far too short and bland to receive anything other than a rental.

ToxicideII

Paper Mario: TTYD Review

The beginning of the game is very reminiscent of Paper Mario for the N64. However, everything is much more polished. The graphics are crisp and effective, and the entire game exudes a charm and level of creativity that we Nintendo fans have come to love. If you have played Mario & Luigi, then you know [what to expect from] the writing. Fantastic. Clever, funny, easy to grasp for younger players but still incredibly witty for the rest of us.

Paper Mario 2 is exactly the kind of RPG I love. Interactive battles, great characters and silly situations that don't take themselves too seriously. Bottom line: If you own a GameCube, buy this game. Mario and the gang will win you over no matter your age or interests. It's beautiful, brilliant and charming.

1-Up

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JUST A MILLION MORE TO GO.

Compete in off-the-wall party games

Battle your friends head-to-head

Hundreds of crazy monster-building options

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NINTENDO ONLINE

www.nintendo.com

Two Echoes Sites Revealed

Games

Featured Title | GCN

We've had our hands full with all the great games that are coming out in November. In fact, every site we're covering this month features a November release. Metroid Prime 2 Echoes, arguably the most anticipated game in the bunch, has *two* sites dedicated to it—metroid.com and channel51.org—and there *might* be more (hint hint). Last month we sprinkled clues about the underground site, channel51.org, in the N-Sider Forums and the Online column. It looks like a normal website about UFOs and extra terrestrials, but those who dig deeper will discover messages about Echoes. The game's main site, metroid.com, uses an exploratory navigation system. For example, you can click on certain areas to wander through amazing 3-D Aether environments, and slick videos from the game will play as you transition from one page to the next. You can also scan the site through a virtual visor to unveil info about new weapons and power-ups and to find secret Echoes downloads, including wallpapers and AIM icons. Register your game at nintendo.com to earn even more Echoes downloads!

www.metroid.com

It's Coming. . . .

News

Nintendo DS

Explore every facet of the Nintendo DS at nintendods.com. The site has gorgeous coverage of the new platform's sound, dual screen, speech options, touch sensitivity and connection possibilities, plus an interactive 3-D DS model. In other areas you can sign up for the DS newsletter and check out game info, screenshots, release dates and additional info about upcoming titles. If you register your DS at nintendo.com, you'll be entered in a sweepstakes to win a free DS game!

www.nintendods.com

The Fantasy Returns

Games

Upcoming Releases | GBA

On November 29th, experience the games that began a Final Fantasy legacy. The Final Fantasy I & II: Dawn of Souls site at ffdos.nintendo.com will be your source for the two-in-one GBA game. You'll be able to choose from two beautiful versions of the site—one for the original Final Fantasy and one for Final Fantasy II. Site visitors will discover a plethora of info on enemies, characters and more.

ffdos.nintendo.com

Power Tennis Anyone?

Games

Featured Title | GCN

Mario, Luigi and many other Mushroom Kingdom celebrities are hitting the tennis courts for their biggest tournament ever! If you're curious what all the buzz is about, visit mariotennis.com to get a taste of the wacky fun and excitement first hand. The vibrant site offers details about the characters, game modes and unique power shots and much more. Site visitors can also watch gameplay videos that showcase the title's variety of courts and minigames.

www.mariotennis.com

Monkeying Around Online

Games

Featured Title | GBA

Donkey Kong and his primate crew are all about fun—so it's no surprise that their new Donkey Kong Country 2 site is packed with activities. You can earn Banana Coins by playing Flash-based minigames, such as Expresso's Racing and Barrel Blasting, then use the coins to purchase cool DKC2 downloads. You can test your knowledge of the DKC2 site at Swanky Kong's Bonus Bonanza, and learn how to be a formidable boss through Kaptain K. Rool's Be-a-Boss Institute.

www.donkeykongcountry.com

Congratulations to our latest Sages!

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HEROOFTIME07
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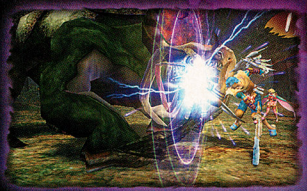
NICKDUDENICK
SONIC12
TIGERSS

BATEN KAITOS™

ETERNAL WINGS AND THE LOST OCEAN

"It's possibly the most beautiful GCN title ever made"
– Nintendo Power

The world of Baten Kaitos exists in an era where lands float in the sky and the once-vast oceans are mere legend. With your help, Kalas and Xelha must struggle to reveal the mystery of the lost ocean and destroy the corruption that threatens their world.



Embark upon an emotional journey across a richly imagined world and detailed character development spanning over 60 hours of gameplay.

Vivid, pre-rendered backgrounds are alive with subtle, ambient animations. Enjoy gloriously rendered battle environments and astounding spell effects.

An unconventional card-based RPG system unites all elements of gameplay with over 1000 types of "Magnus" cards.

Blood
Fantasy Violence
Mild Language

batenkaitos.namco.com

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CHAIN OF MEMORIES

ADVENTURE IS IN THE CARDS

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CHAIN OF MEMORIES
delivers an entirely new adventure and sets the stage for KINGDOM HEARTS II. Sora, Donald and Goofy travel through many vast and colorful worlds in search of their missing companions.

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Disney INTERACTIVE

EVERYONE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Fantasy Violence
Mild Language

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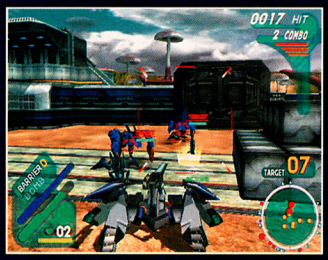
GAME WATCH

THE INSIDE SOURCE FOR NINTENDO NEWS & PREVIEWS

Nintendo may well cause a mad rush for its latest great deal, the Mario Kart: Double Dash!! Bonus Set, this holiday season. Two different sets are already available—see full details on page 22.

EARLY VIEW OF THE '05 BEAT

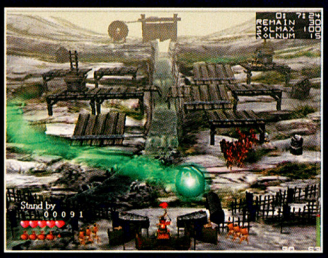
Every year at the Electronic Entertainment Expo, publishers dazzle the world with their wares, then draw a veil of secrecy over many titles. Nintendo's no exception. Though we've recently seen more of Donkey Kong Jungle Beat, the DK-Bongo-fueled adventure that took E^3 by storm in '04 (witness the spectacle to the right), we've heard precious little about some of the other E^3 favorites slated for 2005—until now. New screens for many games have emerged from Japan, and they show where the Nintendo GameCube's going in the new year. With the inclusion of third-party titles like Capcom's Resident Evil 4, due in mid-January, '05 is shaping up to be intense on the GCN.



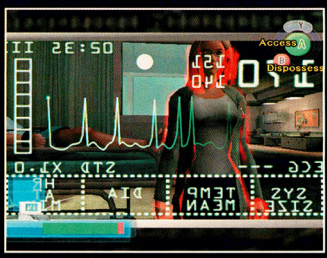
Star Fox: Assault: The action-shooter restores the intergalactic fox to his rightful duties—blasting, blasting and more blasting. The latest screens reveal his new stomping grounds and fresh foes.

Advance Wars: Under Fire: Looks like AW's mission to infiltrate the GCN is well under way.

Fire Emblem: The series is shaping up to be the answer to every GCN owner's tactical fantasies.



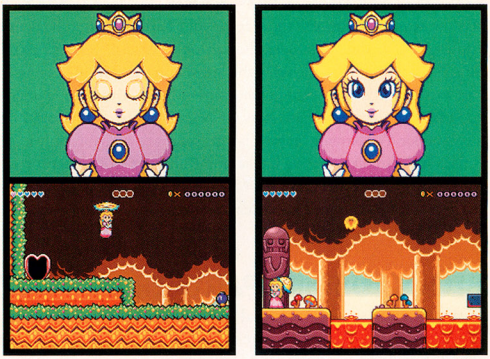
Odama: It's medieval warfare. It's pinball. And it's looking like one of the coolest ideas ever.



Geist: Further evidence of item possession? The scare-tactics FPS will enthrall gamers in 2005.

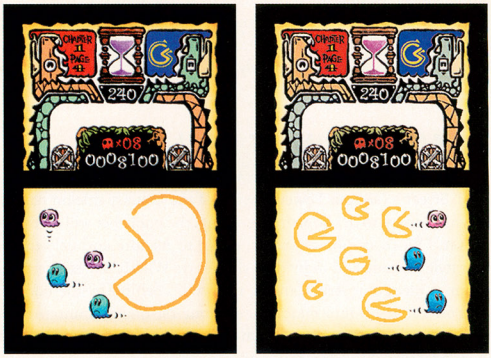
BEYOND THE US WITH NINTENDO DS

Twelve Nintendo DS games, not counting the Metroid Prime Hunters demo and PictoChat included with the DS, will fill the rest of 2004 with dual-screened wonder. This issue's 16-page feature on the DS covers them in detail, plus more games that Reggie Fils-Aime, Nintendo's executive vice president of sales and marketing, revealed at the Nintendo Gamer's Summit in early October. And while Reggie revealed key details about DS games in North America, Nintendo's president, Satoru Iwata, and its chief game visionary, Shigeru Miyamoto, were introducing a wave of DS titles that will soon be released in Japan. A few—like a game in Sega's Puyo Pop series—haven't yet been officially announced for stateside release, but most are in development for possible US release (see pages 47 and 48), such as DS versions of Four Swords and Final Fantasy III. Quite a few additional titles got a lot of press in Japan in October. Check out the following screenshots—including two of a Princess Peach game not yet slated for the US—to see even more examples of the energy that developers are pouring into the system.

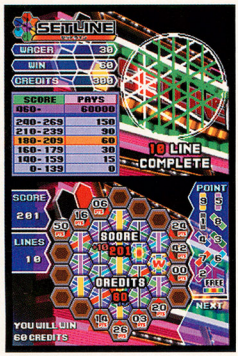


In a juicy first, Princess Peach will have marquee billing in a DS title slated for Japanese release, though not yet announced for North America. The game's umbrella-packin' princess will always let you know how she's feeling.

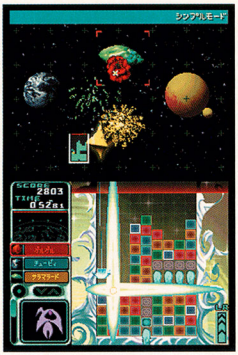
Egg Monster Heroes: Square Enix debuted its whimsical, touch-centric epic at E³. In a twist on turn-based battling, you'll select specific body parts to use and to deliver strikes against, plus literally push soldiers into battle.



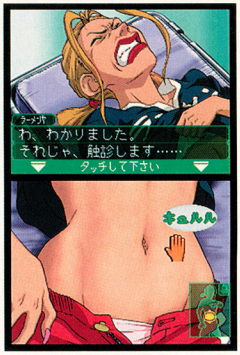
Pac-Pix: One of the most ingenious third-party titles to draw upon the novelty of the DS stylus, Namco's Pac-Pix quick-sketch concept seems like it's come a long way since its DS E³ appearance—ghosts beware.



Brain Twisting Game Vol. 1: The puzzle game will be among the first DS titles to tease brains in Japan.



Meteos: Bandai's game will merge puzzle-action play with the fate of a galaxy of planets.



Intern Tendo Dokuta: One of two medical games slated for the DS, Spike Co.'s upcoming title lets players literally go hands-on with patients shown on the touch screen—one of the most interesting DS experiments.

MORE GAME FOR LESS CASH ON THE GCN

'Tis the season to squeeze more from your hard-earned dollars, and Nintendo's got its own enticing GCN deal. The Mario Kart: Double Dash!! Bonus Set for $99.99 Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price includes the latest entry in Mario's racing series—by far the slickest kart racer in this hardware generation—plus a Nintendo GameCube and a $15 certificate good for the purchase of any new GCN game, such as Metroid Prime 2 Echoes. If you want a second kind of bargain, get the bonus set that's available only at Target, WalMart, Best Buy, Kmart and Circuit City: you'll take home an extra Controller instead of the $15 certificate—a great way to take advantage of Mario Kart's two-player co-op control right out of the box. It's heartwarming when a good deal can help gamers unite Bowser and Wario in the common cause of smashing competitors.

BLOCKBUSTERS PARTNER UP FOR NEXT YEAR

With this year's crop of potential silver-screen blockbusters nearly exhausted, major publishers are announcing their plans for games tied into 2005 movies, which will join a field already buzzing with games based on films ranging from Universal's CGI flick, *Robots*, to Buena Vista's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Electronic Arts, in partnership with Warner Bros. Interactive, will release Batman Begins alongside the summer '05 movie, which promises to be the Caped Crusader's grimmest big-screen bow ever. Ubisoft will helm the GBA and DS versions of Star Wars: *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, this spring, then ring out the year with an "all-platform" adaptation of Universal's *King Kong*—Peter Jackson's next highly anticipated venture.

FIFA'S KEEPIN' IT REAL

EA Sports's street smarts will grow by leaps and bounds in 2005. Following the charge of NFL Street 2 (see our Power Preview of the January title on page 54) and NBA Street: Vol. 3, which drives to the hoop in the spring, the publisher will do the same for soccer with FIFA Street. "We're stripping [soccer] down to its core and delivering a game that's all about freestyle attitude and individual skill," says Wil Mozell, senior producer on a newly formed team at Electronic Arts Canada, the studio behind by-the-book FIFA Soccer. FIFA Street will offer four-on-four matchups and one-on-one encounters set among the globe's greatest hot spots of street soccer, such as Rio de Janeiro (pictured to the right). Look forward to kicking it with FIFA Street in 2005.

QUICK HITS OF BIG NEWS

NAMCO ENVISIONS BIG THINGS FOR GBA THROUGH 2006

With three of Namco's big franchises—in the form of Pac-Man World, Dead to Rights and Ace Combat Advance—coming to the Game Boy Advance by the end of 2004, the news that Namco plans to release "12 titles per year on the GBA" portends great times ahead for the system. Two titles are already pinned down for February: Mr. Driller 2 will shake the handheld with arcade action, and Klonoa 2: Dream Champ Tournament will bring the platforming series (previewed on page 56) back to the GBA. In June, Namco will launch a "new RPG experience" set in a high-tech future on the GBA. We'll have more info soon.

STAR WARS GOES LEGO IN APRIL

Eidos has announced that it's releasing LEGO *Star Wars* for the GBA in April 2005. As for which movie mythology it will tie into—the classic trilogy or the soon-to-be-wrapped-up trilogy—stay tuned for details.

X-MEN PLAN A SECOND LEGEND

Citing hotcakes-level consumption of X-Men Legends, Activision has annoucned that it's already got a sequel in development. With decades of backstory and characters to explore, the comic series was a long-awaited natural for an RPG, and news of a second will send fans into speculation overdrive about what villains and storylines will be thrown into the mutant mix.

UBISOFT GIVES UP THE GHOST DETAILS

Ubisoft has two different versions of Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon 2 in the works for consoles—one that takes place four years before the other—and the GCN will play host to the game that kicks off the sequel's storyline. Expect it in 2005.

MEDAL OF HONOR TURNS THE DOGS LOOSE

After tackling the Pacific Theater in 2003's Medal of Honor: Rising Sun, EA is steering its WWII FPS series back to Europe in the upcoming GCN sequel this spring. Medal of Honor: Dogs of War will find the British on the ropes in 1942, and the player will forge through battles that helped turn the tide for the Allies.

THQ LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

No publisher works as hard to bring TV and movie tie-ins to gaming as THQ, and Nickelodeon recently gave it the exclusive rights to develop the channel's shows into games through 2010. In addition to *SpongeBob SquarePants* and other fave series, expect Nick's upcoming shows *Danny Phantom* and *Barnyard* to emerge from the deal. THQ has also thrown its weight behind the Nintendo DS in a big way, with versions of *The Incredibles* and *Cars* (Disney/Pixar) and several Nick shows in the works. On a non-show note, THQ will also bring Microsoft's Zoo Tycoon series to the new handheld.

LION GOES HANDS-ON WITH STEVE-O'S DS

Jackass alumni and *Wildboyz* MTV mainstays Steve-O and Chris Pontius have built careers out of testing the limits of the adage, "it's all fun and games until someone loses an eye." In a recent shoot for a Nintendo DS commercial, the limits got pushed much further than intended. Nintendo's senior manager of advertising, Kelli Koenig, was watching director Jeff Tremaine's shoot go according to plan—with tree-bound Steve-O playing a wireless game with elephant-jockey Pontius—when suddenly things leapt off script. "All of a sudden Steve-O got a crazy look on his face," said Koenig, who'd been watching him via monitor in a locked van. "Shortly thereafter a lion head popped into view and started heading right for him." Ever the pro in a tricky scenario, Steve-O defused the situation. "He was amazing," she noted. "He kept saying 'good kitty, good kitty' to keep the lion calm." Meanwhile, Koenig says, production staffers waved raw chicken at the beast. Though you can see the touch-and-go scenario in the director's final cut of the TV commercial, thrill seekers who want to peek behind the scenes of the commercial shoot—and get an incredibly candid look at Steve-O and Chris Pontius before and after the unscripted tasting—can check out the full footage at nintendo.com.

SEGA EXPLAINS THE MAGIC, NP FEELS IT DEEPLY

Of all the Nintendo DS launch titles, Sega's Feel the Magic: XY/XX (fully previewed on page 40) may cozy up to the system's potential the most. Sega has given the DS touch screen positive strokes and clearly sees the system as an incubator for entirely new genres. We spoke with Sega producer Yojiro Ogawa of SonicTeam about what it takes to grab a wild new idea by the reins, and how Feel the Magic found inspiration more in Cameron Diaz and Ben Stiller than any gaming luminaries.

Nintendo Power: The DS's two screens, touch sensitivity, wireless options and voice recognition capabilities are challenging developers to reinvent ways in which players interface with games. How is the DS well-suited to such an unusual game?

Yojiro Ogawa: We are crazy about the DS hardware because it has allowed us to do so many new things. Gamers will definitely get a better idea by touching and playing than by just seeing. What we were looking to do was create a game with movielike elements in which to win the attention of a beautiful woman—and, ultimately, to go out with her. In order to get through these events, you'll use the many functions of DS hardware.

NP: The game presents a series of minigames that deal with a shy boy trying to impress a popular girl. What are some of your favorite minigames?

YO: I would say the last "performance" and the final cut scene is my favorite. But I cannot share the specific details because I don't wish to spoil it for gamers. What I also find unique and cool about the game is the structure itself and how it blends comedy and dramatic elements; it begins on the funny side and ends on the serious side. I hope American gamers will enjoy its unique story as much as we at SonicTeam do.

NP: Have any other games been an influence on this one?

YO: Movies, such as *There's Something About Mary* or *A Life Less Ordinary*, have been a greater influence than games when developing Feel the Magic. In Japan, couples see movies casually, but they don't have the idea that they'd play games lightheartedly. So we made the game in hopes that two can have fun playing Feel the Magic together. With a single GBA, you can't play together with your boy- or girlfriend, but with Nintendo DS, you can place it on a table and play together with the full view of both windows. The touch-sensitive panel truly shines in this respect because, to date, we have been bound by the idea that we play games alone. However, the DS allows us to bring handheld gaming into more social situations.

NP: Feel the Magic's director, Takumi Yoshinaga, directed Space Channel 5—any similarities between the two games?

YO: Yoshinaga has his own original world view in creating games. In that sense, Feel the Magic is similar to the truly amazing world of Space Channel 5. The similarities don't go much further than that. With Feel the Magic, the priority is on gaming first and foremost in a way that's typical of SonicTeam.

NP: Several members of the development team are women. What effect, if any, did that have on the direction of the project?

YO: The female influence on development was critical. We needed them to stop the male staff from taking the story to wild and aggressive extremes. [Laughs.] Seriously, the female crew really did help to maintain a subtle "tenderness" that is expressed throughout the story.

NP: The look of the game seems to have a '70s influence. How would you describe the game's visual style?

YO: Yoshinaga designed Feel the Magic to have a funky '70s aesthetic. Old-school gamers in the US might even remember the introduction to the original *Charlie's Angels* TV series. I think that the art-design team did a terrific job considering that the result—after much trial and error—is extremely stylish.

NP: What Nintendo DS titles in development are you looking forward to playing?

YO: If I had to choose one, I would have to pick Nintendogs because you actually feel like you are playing with a dog. Without using any buttons, you can call your dog and he'll respond, turning around when he hears you. The development team did a great job implementing features that are not easy to conceptualize.

NP: What game genres do you think will take off on the Nintendo DS?

YO: It's hard to predict. Perhaps new DS games will surface that allow you to play with only one hand while the hardware sits on the desk. (I mean, without holding the DS with two hands. . . .)

GAME WATCH FORECAST

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

ADVANCE WARS: UNDER FIRE
BATMAN BEGINS
CHICKEN LITTLE
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE
CONAN: THE DARK AXE
DEAD PHOENIX
DEXTER'S LABORATORY
DIGIMON WORLD 4
DISNEY'S WINNIE THE POOH RUMBLY TUMBLY ADVENTURE
DONKEY KONG JUNGLE BEAT
DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 2
FIFA STREET
FIRE EMBLEM
FROGGER
FUNKYDILLA
GEIST
GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT
JUSTICE LEAGUE
KILLER 7
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA*
LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
MARIO PARTY 6
MEDAL OF HONOR: DOGS OF WAR
MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES 2
MINI-GOLF MAYHEM
MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM
THE MOVIES
NBA STREET V3
NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2
NFL STREET 2
ODAMA
ONE PIECE: TREASURE BATTLE
PILLAGE
PINBALL HALL OF FAME
PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN
RESIDENT EVIL 4
ROBOTS
ROCKET POWER: ZERO GRAVITY ZONE
ROOM ZOOM
SCALER
SPIDER-MAN 3
STAR FOX: ASSAULT
STARCRAFT: GHOST
STRIKE FORCE BOWLING
TEN PIN ALLEY 2
TIMESPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT
TINY TOONS: DEFENDERS OF THE LOONI-VERSE
TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON 2
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY
UNITY
X-MEN LEGENDS 2*
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POKER
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POOL 2004
WORMS FORTS: UNDER SIEGE!

GAME BOY ADVANCE

ACE COMBAT ADVANCE
AERIAL ACES
BANJO PILOT
BATMAN BEGINS
BEJEWELED
BEYBLADE G-REVOLUTION
CABALA'S BIG GAME HUNTER 2005 ADVENTURES
CHICKEN LITTLE
CT SPECIAL FORCES 3: BIOTERROR
CUSTOM ROBO GX
DISNEY'S WINNIE THE POOH RUMBLY TUMBLY ADVENTURE
DK: KING OF SWING
DORA THE EXPLORER: SUPER STAR ADVENTURES
DR. SEUSS: THE SEUSSATIONAL JOURNEY
F-18 SUPER HORNET
FAMISTA ADVANCE
HAMTARO: RAINBOW RESCUE
HARDCORE POOL
HOT WHEELS STUNT TRACK CHALLENGE
I-NINJA
ICE NINE
JUKA AND THE MONOPHONIC MENACE
KINGDOM HEARTS: CHAIN OF MEMORIES
KLONOA 2: DREAM CHAMP TOURNAMENT
LADY SIA II
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE MINISH CAP
LEGO STAR WARS
MARIO PARTY ADVANCE
MEGA MAN ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION
METAL SLUG ADVANCE
MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST 3
MONSTER TRUCKS
MR. DRILLER 2
ONE PIECE: GRAND BATTLE
PAC-MAN WORLD
PAYBACK
PIRATE BATTLE
RACING GEARS ADVANCE
RADIUM
RAVE MASTER
RIVER KING
ROBOTS
SANTA CLAUS SAVES THE EARTH
SCURGE: HIVE
SMASHING DRIVE
SPEED BALL 2: BRUTAL DELUXE
STAR WARS: EPISODE III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
TALES OF PHANTASIA
TALES OF THE WORLD: NARIKIRI DUNGEON 2
TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER
TIM BURTON'S THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS
TINY TOON ADVENTURES: SCARY DREAMS
TOKYO XTREME RACER ADVANCE
ULTIMATE TABLE GAMES
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POKER
WORLD REBORN
X-BLADEZ: INLINE SKATER
XYANIDE
YU-GI-OH! DESTINY BOARD TRAVELER

NINTENDO DS

ADVANCE WARS DS*
AIR ASSAULT 2
ANIMAL CROSSING DS*
ANOTHER*
ASPHALT URBAN GT
ATARI CLASSICS
BOKTAI*
BOMBERMAN
BRAIN TWISTING GAME VOL. 1*
CADACEUS
CASTLEVANIA*
CHORO-Q DS
DRAGON BALL Z
DRAGON BOOSTER*
DRAGON QUEST MONSTERS*
DYNASTY WARRIORS*
EGG MONSTER HEROES
FEEL THE MAGIC: XY/XX
FINAL FANTASY III
FINAL FANTASY: CRYSTAL CHRONICLES*
FROGGER 2005*
FUSHIGI NO DUNGEON
THE GAME OF LIFE DS
GOLDENEYE
GYAKUTEN SAIBAN (OBJECTION COURT)*
HARVEST MOON FOR DS*
HISTORICAL SIMULATION GAME*
THE INCREDIBLES
INTERN TENDO DOKUTA
JAM WITH THE BAND*
LEGEND OF THE RIVER KING*
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS*
MADDEN NFL 2005
MAH-JONG*
MARIO KART DS*
MEGA MAN BATTLE NETWORK
METEOS
METROID PRIME HUNTERS
MINNA NO MAHJONG*
MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM SEED
MONSTER RANCHER
MOONLIGHT FABLES*
MR. DRILLER: DRILL SPIRITS
NANOSTRAY
NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND
NEW SUPER MARIO BROS.*
NINTENDOGS*
ONE-LINE PUZZLE*
ONE PIECE
ORGANIZER PLUS
PAC 'N ROLL*
PAC-PIX*
PICTOCHAT
PING PALS
RACE GAME*
RAYMAN DS*
RIDGE RACER DS
ROBOTS
SECRET OF MANA*
SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI DS
SLIME MORIMORI DRAGON QUEST*
SNOWBOARD KIDS DS
SONIC DS*
SPIDER-MAN 2
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
SPRUNG
STAR WARS: EPISODE III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
SUPER MARIO 64 DS
SURVIVAL KIDS*
TAK*
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR
ULTIMATE BRAIN GAMES
ULTIMATE CARD GAMES
ULTIMATE POCKET GAMES
THE URBZ: SIMS IN THE CITY
URUSEIYATSURA
VANDAL HEARTS*
VIEWTIFUL JOE
WARIOWARE, INC. DS*
WINX*
WORLD SOCCER WINNING ELEVEN*
YOSHI'S TOUCH & GO*
YU-GI-OH!: NIGHTMARE TROUBADOUR
ZOO TYCOON

YELLOW TEXT SIGNIFIES NEW GAMES ADDED TO THE LIST
* WORKING TITLE

D MAX
闇
光
Light and darkness are in all things. Master both. Kaijudo.
デュエル・マスターズ
DUEL MASTERS
TRADING CARD GAME
SHADOWCLASH OF BLINDING NIGHT
AVAILABLE 11.2004
duelmasters.com
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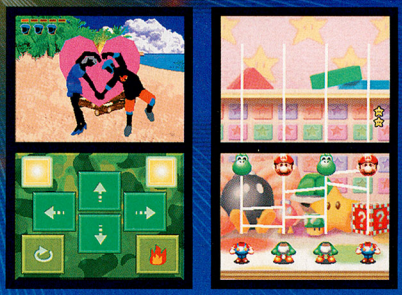
POWER CHARTS. 187

Nintendo DS

We don't have any sales data for the DS yet, of course, but we wanted to let you know which of the launch titles the NP Krew has been having the most fun with. Our top choice may surprise you.

	PLAYER'S CHOICE* NINTENDO DS	PRIOR POSITION	MONTHS ON CHART
1	FEEL THE MAGIC: XY/XX	•	1
2	SUPER MARIO 64 DS	•	1
3	MADDEN NFL 2005	•	1
4	SPRUNG	•	1
5	RIDGE RACER DS	•	1

*Player's Choice and Most Wanted information courtesy of the NP Krew.



Nintendo GameCube

Three new entries debut atop the GCN sales chart this month, with Captain Olimar and the Pikmin leading the charge. The NP Krew, meanwhile, continues to enjoy the latest exploits of Samus and Joe.

	TOP-SELLING GAMES* NINTENDO GAMECUBE	PRIOR POSITION	MONTHS ON CHART
1	PIKMIN 2	•	1
2	WWE: DAY OF RECKONING	•	1
3	DONKEY KONGA	•	1
4	SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE	4	33
5	TALES OF SYMPHONIA	2	3
6	MADDEN NFL 2005	1	2
7	SONIC MEGA COLLECTION	6	13
8	X-MEN LEGENDS	•	1
9	SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: BATTLE FOR BIKINI BOTTOM	11	4
10	MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!	7	11

*Sales data courtesy of the NPDFunworld TRSTS Video Game Source.

	PLAYER'S CHOICE* NINTENDO GAMECUBE	PRIOR POSITION	MONTHS ON CHART
1	METROID PRIME 2 ECHOES	1	2
2	VIEWTIFUL JOE 2	3	2
3	BATEN KAITOS: ETERNAL WINGS AND THE LOST OCEAN	2	3
4	GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT	•	1
5	PAPER MARIO: THE THOUSAND-YEAR DOOR	4	3
6	CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR	•	1
7	PIKMIN 2	5	6
8	SECOND SIGHT	8	4
9	MADDEN NFL 2005	10	4
10	VIRTUA QUEST	•	1

*Player's Choice and Most Wanted information courtesy of the NP Krew.

Future Release

	MOST WANTED	PLATFORM	PRIOR POSITION	MO. ON CHART
1	RESIDENT EVIL 4	GCN	1	19
2	THE LEGEND OF ZELDA	GCN	2	3
3	PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN	GCN	3	4
4	ADVANCE WARS DS	NDS	•	1
5	WARIOWARE, INC. DS	NDS	•	1

KEY:
- NINTENDO GAMECUBE
- GAME BOY ADVANCE
- NINTENDO DS

Game Boy

In what will surely come as a shock to the entire gaming world, Pokémon FireRed and LeafGreen were the top-selling GBA games for the month. Pikachu and company show no signs of slowing down.

TOP-SELLING GAMES* GAME BOY

		PRIOR POSITION	MONTHS ON CHART
1	POKéMON FIRERED	•	1
2	POKéMON LEAFGREEN	•	1
3	DRAGON BALL Z: BUU'S FURY	•	1
4	YU-GI-OH!: RESHEF OF DESTRUCTION	1	3
5	SPIDER-MAN 2	2	3
6	SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4: SUPER MARIO BROS. 3	7	12
7	MARIO VS. DONKEY KONG	6	5
8	SUPER MARIO BROS. (CLASSIC NES SERIES)	4	4
9	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	•	4
10	POKéMON RUBY	3	18

*Sales data courtesy of the NPDFunworld TRSTS Video Game Source.

PLAYER'S CHOICE* GAME BOY

		PRIOR POSITION	MONTHS ON CHART
1	THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: MINISH CAP	•	1
2	FINAL FANTASY I & II: DAWN OF SOULS	1	2
3	KINGDOM HEARTS: CHAIN OF MEMORIES	2	2
4	GRAND THEFT AUTO ADVANCE	5	2
5	THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE	•	1
6	ASTRO BOY: OMEGA FACTOR	6	4
7	KLONOA 2	•	1
8	MEGA MAN ZERO 3	3	2
9	IT'S MR. PANTS	•	1
10	ADVANCE GUARDIAN HEROES	7	4

*Player's Choice and Most Wanted information courtesy of the NP Krew.

OK TO PLAY?

CHECK THE RATINGS ON EVERY VIDEO GAME BOX

EARLY CHILDHOOD EVERYONE TEEN

MATURE 17+ ADULTS ONLY 18+

ON FRONT

VIDEO GAME E

ON BACK

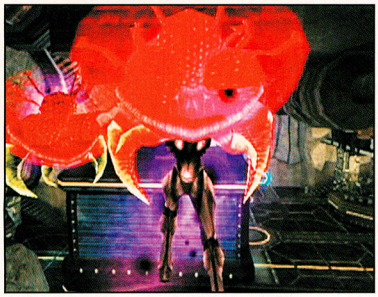
EVERYONE E Comic Mischief Mild Lyrics

ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

ESRB Entertainment Software Rating Board WWW.ESRB.ORG

SCREEN TEST

If we were any funnier, the world might very well end. But if you're feeling like an apocalyptic wit yourself, send your best Screen Test lines to poweron@nintendopower.com.



Hey, lady, lose the hat! The folks behind you can't see.

YOUR SCREEN TEST CAPTIONS

Our line was: The old man and the wheeee!

Oh man, I didn't know they started initiating people into the old folks' home. —Kalen C.

Grab a leg and make a wish. —Jim M.

Hey, watch the Speedo! —Benjamin D.

Billy has found a new way to help the elderly cross the street. —Pikaash2586

This explains why there was no Rocky XXII. —Harry J.

Can your chiropractor do this? —Cat Guy

EVERYONE DOWN! I've got an old man and I'm not afraid to use him! —Dan R.

Oops. Thought you were the heavyweight title belt. —Chris W.

I found this in my back pocket. Want it? —Quentin1326

Tommy at age nine: stealing lunch money from second graders. Tommy at age 39: stealing medication money from seniors. —Tristan W.

There's still mud on my boot! Shine it better! —Angela W.

Wheee! I haven't had this much fun since New Year's! —Michael O.

In an effort to avoid another Florida recount, this is how the election was decided. —Bill T.

Ballet Dancer Yearly says "Show of the year! The old man was enchanting! —HarvestSprite

FAILED NINTENDO DS SLOGANS

As you may have heard, Nintendo is launching a multimillion-dollar Nintendo DS ad campaign that is built around the phrase "touching is good." Nintendo spent months coming up with that slogan, and there were many phrases that fell by the wayside. Below, we present some of the slogans that didn't make the cut.

Touching is super-de-duper.

Pistols at dawn! Oh, wait . . . DUAL Screen.

DS pwns!

Nintendo DS is off the hizzy for shizzy.

DS: Buy it or we break your thumbs.

Gotta touch 'em all!

Your mama's so fat, she needs two screens.

Nintendo DS: Word up, yo!

Touch much?

Dude, where's my DS?

Nintendo DS: Kicking ass and taking names.

Now with painfully sharp edges.

DS: The D stands for Dy-no-mite!

We put the DS in Dual Screen.

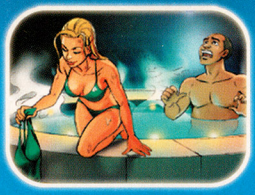
Please don't feed the DS.

If you don't have one, the other kids will mock you.

Admit it—if you could marry one, you would.

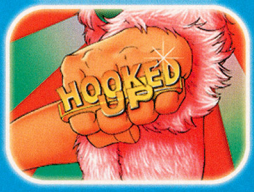
DS: Setting off airport metal detectors in style.

The Nintendo DS: If it were any cooler, you could use it to make those little shaved ice treats with the syrup that you buy at the county fair.

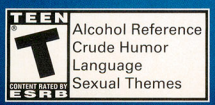


SPRUNG™

A Game Where Everyone Scores



DOUBLE THE LOVE... Looking for nookie? You've come to the right place – a hopping ski resort with hot tubs, nightclubs, and tons of frisky singles looking for a spring fling. Work all the angles in more than 50 dating missions, as either the guy or the girl. With two screens and plenty of competition, you can watch your rivals fumble for a reply on one screen, while you lay on the love on the other. You've got them in the palm of your hand. But have you got the skills to seal the deal?



NINTENDO DS™

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UBISOFT™

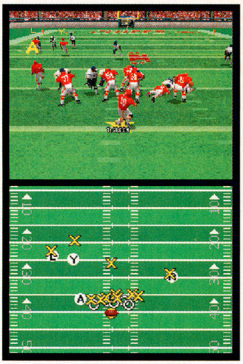
Nintendo DS: Making Waves in Gaming

First Contact

Though no two gamers are exactly alike, the video game industry sometimes loses sight of individual style in the search for megahits. The Nintendo DS, more than any system ever released, is poised to correct that with hardware—dual screens, touch control, wireless multiplayer and other powerful features—that has stirred the passions of game makers around the world. With the release of the DS on November 21, you're guaranteed to get ahold of a title that will entertain you to *your* core.

A System in Touch with Gamers

Though game developers have answered the call of the DS in radically different ways, ultimately the system speaks to players. The launch titles alone cover any genre that you've ever imagined, plus some you haven't. For every huge franchise that's evolving via the DS—like Mario, Madden and Spider-Man—there's a totally original game that resulted from a wild-eyed visionary's reaching deep into the DS and pulling up a whopper. Not including the software packed in with the Nintendo DS, you'll see 12 titles surrounding launch—the next 13 pages of our 16-page blowout will give you a hands-on look.



The Madden NFL franchise rules football on all gaming systems. But the DS version takes a quantum leap over other versions—check it out on page 36.

Sega hasn't unleashed a no-holds-barred work of mad genius like Feel the Magic: XY/XX in eons. Find out what an evening with the sizzling game will teach ya on page 40.

The DS touch screen inspired developers to come up with revolutionary ideas about play control. Get a grip on how Ridge Racer DS is doing the deed on page 42.

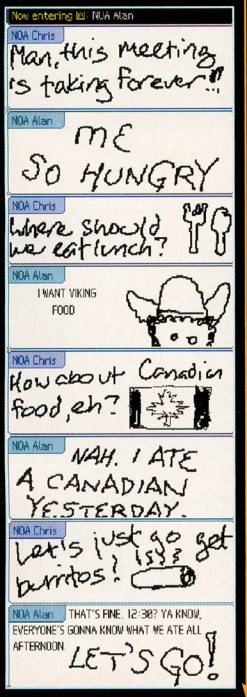
A Communication Revolution

Chat Session

Nintendo's serious about sparking a renaissance in handheld gaming. At $149.99 MSRP, the system's price is right, and you won't have to shell out for memory cards or sticks, either; the DS promises save files on every game card. Voracious gamers seeking even more enticement will have it from the get-go with PictoChat. Now that we've gotten personal with the built-in communication software—see a few of our private wireless chats below—we're not sure how we ever lived without it.

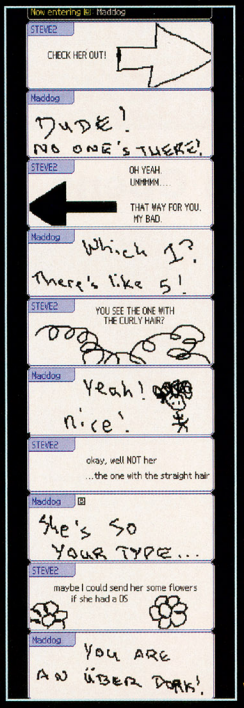
Is It Lunch Yet?

PictoChat supports four chat rooms, each with up to 16 people, at a distance of up to 65 feet. At Nintendo HQ, some of us are using it to make plans for lunch when we're supposed to be focusing on "important" stuff. Don't tell our bosses.



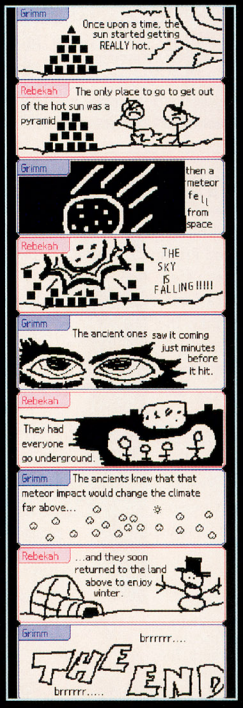
For Your Eyes Only

It's not polite to talk about people behind their backs. That's why we're obsessed with PictoChat. You don't need to talk at all, just type and sketch out what you want to say, whether it's factual, fictional, flirtatious or downright frightening.



Art of One-Upping

Sparks fly at NP when a writer and a designer collide. One of the most stupidly fun things that we've made up to do is to tell stories—each PictoChatter takes a turn telling the next part. We've spun some ridiculously dumb tales.

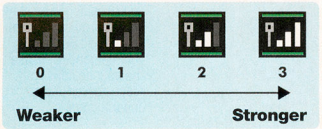


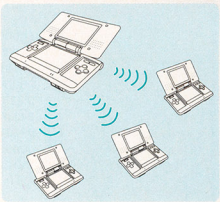
PictoChat Tips & Tricks

- PictoChat keeps a superlong thread of back chat on the top screen. You can easily scroll up to track comments.
- Better yet, you can copy any PictoChat entry in your chat session, then modify it with all tools at hand.
- The keyboard offers five categories of characters, including a wide range of symbols and Japanese lettering. You'll find lots of ways to express yourself by just typing.
- You won't need to use the hard return and space bar to position keyboard characters for artful effect. Drag a character anywhere on the field, then start typing from there.
- Experiment. We figured out that you could create a white-on-black effect by rubbing the screen vigorously to ink it up, then using the eraser to write messages.

Wireless Gaming Unleashed

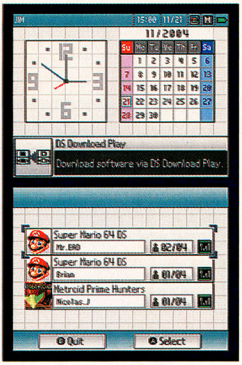
If the success of the WaveBird for the GCN is any indication, gamers love slipping the leash. We're grateful for the link-cable gameplay we've had all these years, but we're *really* happy that Nintendo has finally cut the cord—DS wireless play is awesome. To establish a strong connection, start a wireless session with all systems within 30 feet. You can then spread out the players to a maximum distance of 65 feet before you may lose connection. Keep an eye on the onscreen icon (all versions pictured to the left) that shows show strong your connection to the group is.





Get the Download

A techy spec about DS Download Play now has a lot more meaning. Some games, such as Ridge Racer DS, Super Mario 64 DS and Ping Pals, will allow the game owner to broadcast code to DS players who don't have their own game. It's great for publishers, who want people to try their titles, and great for gamers, who can invite DS users in wireless range to join in—no fuss. If you want to receive a game, you simply touch the DS Download Play button to see who's broadcasting within range.



Wireless Alert

Everything revolutionary does come with risk. So for all those new to the privacy issues that swirl around chat rooms, we've ripped a cautionary message right from the Nintendo DS manual.

Important Privacy Info:

Nintendo DS wireless communication, including PictoChat, is not monitored. This means PictoChat does not block messages from strangers. Similar to unmonitored Internet chat rooms, children should be warned about receiving messages from, or communicating with, strangers. Up to 15 other DS users within range of your Nintendo DS may be able to view your nickname and messages within a selected chat room at any time. An adult should assist children with the system setup and instruct them not to use personal information and not meet strangers or give personal information to anyone because it could be read by a stranger. Whatever date you choose to enter as your month/day of birth (year is not asked for), an "it's your birthday" message will be communicated in the chat room on that date. For more information, visit http://www.nintendo.com/consumer/dsprivacy.

Metroid Hunting Season Opens

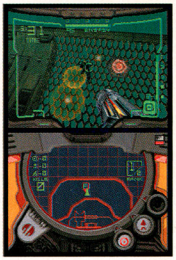
Super Mario 64 DS is Nintendo's first DS title, and another surefire hit, Metroid Prime Hunters, is on the way, too. You'll get a taste of the 2005 title right out of the box: a demo, subtitled First Hunt, will let you take the game for both a single-player and a multiplayer spin. The three single-player modes will let you adapt to running, rolling and shooting with Samus on the DS. Practice up, then go wireless in fragfests with other DS owners in three battle arenas: Trooper Module, Assault Cradle and Ancient Vestige. None of the DS launch titles are first-person shooters—the demo fills an important niche in 2004.

The single-player Regulator mode throws you into the thick of Metroid chaos by giving you 10 minutes to run, jump and blast your way to the final boss. The demo has five control schemes, so you're sure to find a perfect fit.

Trooper Module

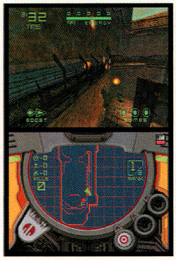
The Trooper Module multiplayer arena is a main hub with an outer ring that you can travel to escape closed-area shoot-outs. If you're caught in the middle, we strongly advise hopping up to the top platform in the hub and picking off your competitors as they try to depose you as king of the hill.

Assault Cradle



The Assault Cradle gives competitors a lot more room to explore. Much more hunting is involved, so keep an eye on the radar screen to make short work of your prey. Use the bounce pads to rocket high in the air, then pepper your earthbound foes with firepower from above.

Ancient Vestige



Morph Ball dynamics are a huge part of Ancient Vestige. It's a closed, claustrophobic area that provides only one avenue of (temporary) escape: Morph Ball pathways overhead. If you're besieged by players that roll up and drop Morph Ball Bombs in your humanoid lap, use the bounce pads to reach power-ups on upper ledges.

Ridge Racer® DS

Inches from opponents in a hairpin turn, you appreciate that breathing is an involuntary impulse.

The classic racing game is now on Nintendo DS™, featuring:

- Innovative touch-screen steering
- 20 challenging racetracks
- Wireless multiplayer support for up to 6*

EVERYONE
E
Mild Suggestive Themes
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

NINTENDO DS.

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*Note: Wireless multiplayer gameplay requires each player to have their own Nintendo DS system and a copy of this game.

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Super Mario 64 DS

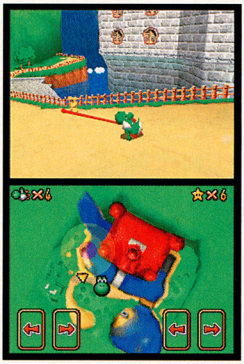
The Nintendo DS gets off to a shining start with the reinvention of Mario's 3-D groundbreaker.

Yoshi lassos enemies and items with his limber tongue, Mario bounds and pounds through dangerous ground, Wario shows off his muscle and Luigi takes the high road with long, acrobatic leaps in the Nintendo DS's dazzling new version of one of Mario's most beloved adventures. In 1996, Super Mario 64 inspired a generation of 3-D platformers. Now it's back and bigger than ever in every way imaginable—interactive action on two screens, four playable characters, more levels, multiplayer competition and touch-controlled minigames. Bowser's made off with a bushel of Stars and trapped three heroes inside Princess Peach's paintings. Starting as Yoshi, you must dive into the paintings to enter obstacle courses, seek out the stars and find your pals. Along the way, you'll slide down slippery slopes, blast out of cannons, use wings to fly, and dive into the briny deep. The original game contained 120 Stars, but Super Mario 64 DS has 150 of the shiny prizes and loads of extras, turning a bona fide classic into the ultimate Nintendo DS adventure.

Mario Pulls off a DS Hat Trick

The stars have come out for Super Mario 64 DS. As you explore the castle grounds and more than a dozen huge environments (each containing multiple missions), you can switch control between rescued heroes, or have one character transform into another by capturing the appropriate hat. Each hero has different basic abilities that make him better-suited for particular missions. Each party member also takes on special abilities by finding Power Flowers. The adventure is an amazing mix of free-form exploration and genuinely challenging platformer levels. Whether you've memorized the original game or you're new to the story, you're in for an action-packed treat.

It's a dash for haberdashery! If you want to take on the abilities of a different character, you can try his hat on for size. Be careful, though. One hit will knock your hat off and you'll revert to the original character.



The only character in the game who doesn't wear a hat is Yoshi. He starts the adventure on the castle grounds, grabs rabbits with his long tongue and sets off to save the others.

Platform games were born with the Super Mario series. Super Mario 64 DS is chockablock with enough obstacles, platforms and pitfalls to keep your fingers twitching for hours.

A Deluxe Experience on the DS

The Nintendo DS delivers a new way to play a familiar adventure, thanks to its innovative use of sight, sound and touch. The action unfolds on the top screen while the bottom screen displays a touch-sensitive map. You motivate your character either by touching the stylus to the map and leading him to his destination, or by using the Control Pad and buttons. If you want to rotate the camera, you can do so by tapping arrows on the map. Both the map and the environment will spin. You can also customize your listening experience—set the music and effects for surround sound or standard stereo, or for listening on headphones.

The top screen displays the scene. You move Mario and company with your choice of three touch- or pad-based control schemes. The touch-sensitive bottom screen shows a map, complete with the locations of Stars and character hats.

Rec-Room Retreat

By collecting keys from a proliferation of rabbits on the castle grounds, each character can unlock minigames in Peach's Rec Room—nine touch-controlled masterpieces per adventurer for a total of 36! Luigi's games are card and casino affairs, ranging from Memory Match to Picture Poker. The rest of the heroes present puzzlers and action games, each allowing you to manipulate objects by touching the stylus to the screen. Some of the games are super-simple, such as Mario's Bob-omb-wrangling Sort or 'Splode, while others, such as Yoshi's Tox Box Shuffle, require significant skill.

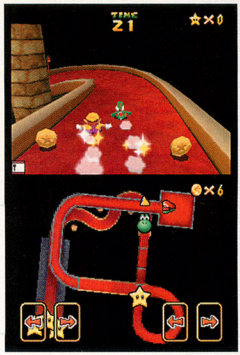
In Trampoline Time, you create trampolines by drawing lines on the touch screen to make flying Marios bounce to the exits.

Luigi deals out the fun with his games of chance, including a Mushroom Kingdom take on roulette.

Super Mario Party

The Nintendo DS's built-in wireless communication compatibility makes setting up a multiplayer game a snap. In Super Mario 64 DS, up to four players can participate using a single game card. The player who has the game card uploads any of four multiplayer courses to other wireless-connected DS systems. Every player starts with a Yoshi of a different color, then scrambles for Stars until time runs out. By grabbing Mario, Wario and Luigi hats scattered over the environment, players can take on the abilities of other characters and use them to collect the Stars or pound them out of their opponents.

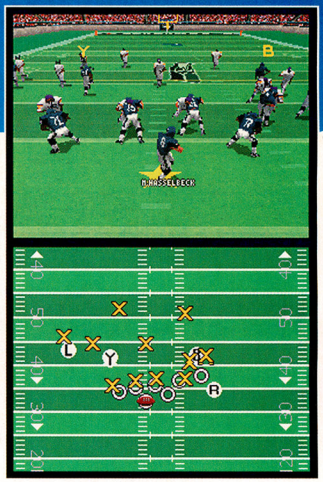
Multiple Yoshis fight for character-transforming hats and Stars in the game's quick and crazy multiplayer mode.

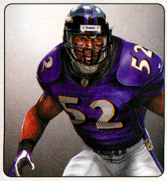


One of the four multiplayer courses starts players at the top of a slide then sends them slipping into a Star-collecting fever.

Madden NFL 2005

The gridiron Godzilla stomps onto the DS with realistic 3-D graphics and features aplenty.



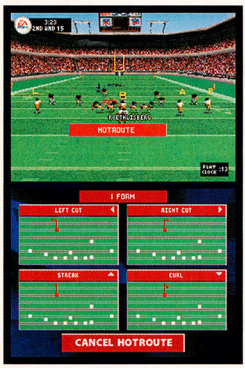


Whether you're a football commentator shuttling across the country in a tricked-out bus or a regular gamer on the go, EA's Madden NFL 2005 for the Nintendo DS is the ultimate portable pigskin companion. The first handheld Madden title to use true 3-D polygonal graphics is a joy to play and to behold. Its rotating view of the field and smoothly animated shoulder-pad-wearing warriors are on display in exhibition games, complete seasons and a full slate of game situations and practice plays. While the top screen displays a traditional view of onfield action, the bottom screen shows a diagram of the field with moving Xs and Os that represent athletes on either side of the ball, allowing you to analyze the sets and watch each play develop from a strategist's perspective. It also shows the playbook while you're in the huddle, and the available audibles when you're at the line. And, if you're challenging another Madden enthusiast to a wireless match, your rival—playing on his or her own DS system—won't be able to see what play you're calling, or even react to your formation, until the ball is about to be snapped. The dominant video game football franchise has taken a leap forward, thanks to the innovations of the Nintendo DS.

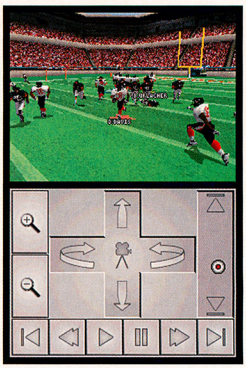
Touch Football

The traditional way of selecting plays in a Madden game is to press a button that corresponds with a play icon onscreen. With Madden NFL 2005 for the DS, though, you can make the connection much more directly by tapping the play icon on the touch-sensitive lower screen. At the line, you can choose to call an audible then touch one of four audible-play icons while you're on offense, or trigger a line shift or secondary shift while you're on defense. The kicking controls and instant-replay controls, too, are triggered by touch.

Even if you're all thumbs, you'll be able to call and execute plays like a pro. You select the set then the play by tapping icons on the lower screen. If you need to make adjustments at the line of scrimmage, you can do that with touch, as well.



In addition to calling audibles, you can instruct individual receivers to change their course by using the Hot Route option. Tap the button that corresponds with the receiver, then select from several paths.



Controlling replays is a cinch with the lower-screen layout. You can move the camera in any direction, zoom in, zoom out, fast-forward, rewind and speed up or slow down playback—all with the touch screen.

Good Sports

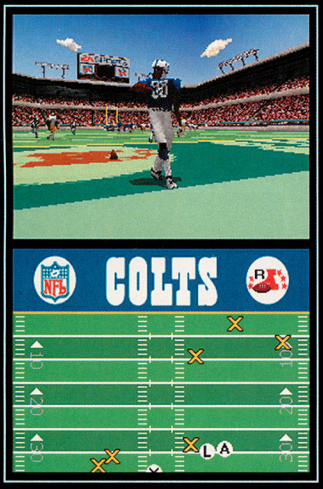
EA Sports producers give us the lowdown on bringing their games to the Nintendo DS.

A good way to gauge the quality of a sports title is to look at how well the game immerses players in the sport. Is it easy to put yourself on the field and get lost in the excitement of the game? With the Nintendo DS's dual screens and touch sensitivity, game developers have new ways to deliver a realistic sports experience. We asked Jeremy Strauser, senior producer of Madden NFL 2005, and Dave McCarthy, producer of Tiger Woods PGA Tour, how they approached the challenges of utilizing the new system to bring players closer to the game.

Nintendo Power: What's your main objective when you begin to develop ideas for a sports title?

Jeremy Strauser: I think first and foremost, we want the game player to have fun. That being said, with Madden football, we also are trying to mimic the real sport, so we try to balance the realism and fun factor constantly. Our main idea with Madden NFL is to deliver a fun and realistic game by focusing on game play, innovation and in-depth features.

Dave McCarthy: Any EA Sports title we work on must meet three primary design criteria. First, it needs to look and sound great. Second, it needs to be as true to the sport as possible, and most importantly, it needs to offer a compelling gameplay experience from start to finish. Realistic and engaging gameplay is key for our titles, and we try to design them so that they are easy to learn but difficult to master. I feel we've met all of these criteria in designing and developing Tiger Woods PGA Tour.



NP: How does your DS title immerse players into the sport in ways that console games have not been able to?

JS: The DS is a really unique device—there are so many new ways to take the game design with what Nintendo has given us. Obviously, the second screen is the major difference, but we're really excited with the wireless link play for Madden NFL 2005. Head-to-head competition is central to the Madden experience, and the DS allows an all-new way of enjoying that.

DM: What we've tried to do with Tiger Woods PGA Tour is provide fans of the franchise and handheld gamers in general a unique gameplay experience. In addition to heavy use of the touch screen and dual-screen layout, we offer a unique mix of courses from the 2004 and 2005 console titles, plus support for wireless play involving up to four users simultaneously.

NP: The DS's touch-screen control gives players a new way to interface with games. What was your process in deciding how your game would use touch sensitivity?

JS: That was a challenge for us on Madden, but we ended by delivering on two goals. First, we made play-calling and related things like audibles easier via the touch screen. It is easier to pick and point your play on Madden DS than to have to navigate an onscreen cursor. Second, we wanted to use the other screen for more information at all times, whether you are in the interface looking at player stats or on the field with the Field Radar feature, you get more info with the DS.

DM: From day one, our objective with Tiger Woods PGA Tour for the Nintendo DS has been to leverage the unique features of the hardware. We made the decision very early on that our entire front-end and back-end gameplay experience should be playable using the touch screen. We're happy to report that you can make your menu selections, aim your shot, choose your clubs and shot type, and even execute your swing without touching a single button. Looking at the dual-screen functionality, we knew the layout would afford us some additional luxuries not available in the console version and we wanted to take advantage of that. You can quickly and easily move your shot indicator around a 2-D map of the hole you're playing, while the second screen moves the camera around a 3-D view of the world to give you a different and useful perspective on your planned shot. The heads-up display on the primary 3-D screen doesn't crowd the view of your golfer, and we've taken some clutter out of the 2-D map by creating a feature we call the Pocket Caddy. Your caddy can slide in and out of your 2-D touch-screen view and will provide you with tips on how to attack each hole, in addition to mechanisms for changing your clubs and shot type, and viewing your opponents' shot location.

NP: The GBA has some limited 3-D processing capabilities, but the DS is the first handheld system to accommodate a true polygonal 3-D engine. What kind of impact does that have on your game?

JS: This is a big impact for Madden; the players now have real uniforms, helmets and body shapes. The animation system is also much more realistic with 3-D players. This transition from 2-D to 3-D players is as big as it was on other consoles—it is night and day. The power of the DS really allowed us to deliver the best handheld Madden experience to date.

DM: I'm pleased with the 3-D output that we're achieving in Tiger Woods PGA Tour for the Nintendo DS. A signature element of the franchise is its rich and vibrant course environments. With the 3-D output of the DS, we're able to bring real-life courses such as Pebble Beach and St. Andrews to life like never before on a handheld. As I attempted to pitch my way out of a 6-foot-high bunker on the Old Course the other day, I realized how this display immerses you more in the gameplay experience than before.

NP: How would you describe your game's multiplayer experience? How is it different with the DS?

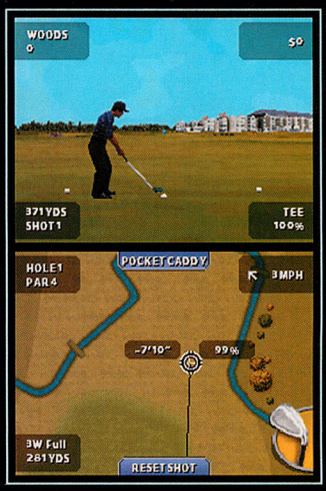
JS: I'm interested to see how this plays out in the real world. Our testers were playing in a pretty controlled environment, linking up wirelessly, testing the range of the connection and things like that. I know for one, when I get my DS and I'm sitting at the gate at the airport, I'll check multiplayer first for other players in range. I'm wondering if we'll have a lot of people playing against each other who wouldn't otherwise.

DM: Our multiplayer experience is true to the game of golf, easy to use, and most importantly, efficient! We will support play for up to four users in a local wireless setting, which is great for a sport that makes heavy use of the foursome gameplay mechanic. It's a very simple process to detect other users in your area, set up your game type (we support three different forms of play), and compete head-to-head. We've also implemented the ability to complete holes simultaneously so that you don't need to wait after every single shot for your slower opponents.

NP: What other sport would you like to see on the DS? How would you make use of the system's capabilities to capitalize on the nature of that sport?

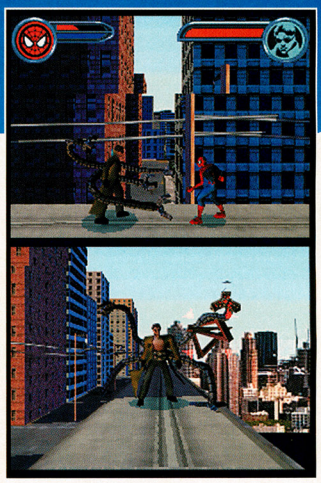
JS: I think sports games are a good fit for the DS, so I'm glad to see Tiger Woods join Madden NFL 2005 on the system right away, but a couple of other titles I think would be good are NBA Live and NASCAR. Both present some interesting ways to use the unique capabilities of the DS.

DM: I'm really excited to see Madden come to the DS. I know that placing the play-call system on the second screen is going to be a big bonus for fans of that franchise. I think almost any sport can make sense on the DS, so we'll listen to our consumers carefully over the next few months, refine our designs, and then look at the possibility of bringing more of your favorite EA Sports titles to the Nintendo DS.



Spider-Man 2

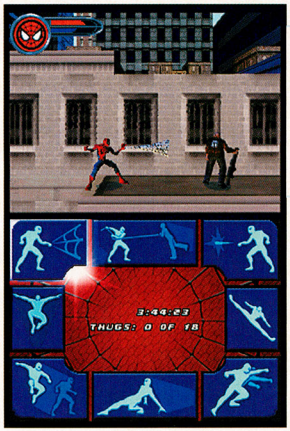
Spidey's dual-screen adventure proves that the Nintendo DS is one swingin' handheld system.



Combining brilliant 3-D graphics with the ease of side-scrolling gameplay, Activision's all-new Spider-Man 2 is a fast-moving adventure that utilizes the enormous polygon-pushing power of the Nintendo DS. Through 20 chapters of web-slinging, thug-flinging superheroics, Marvel's red-and-blue-clad do-gooder zips through the scenes with spiderlike speed. The hero's quickness stands out to developer Vicarious Visions's CEO, Karthik Bala. "It's all about the action and being Spider-Man, all running at a blazingly fast 60 frames per second," explained Bala in an exclusive Nintendo Power interview. "And although, on the surface, the gameplay might seem like [it takes place on a] 2-D plane, you'll notice it actually does have a 3-D dimension that allows for bends and wraparound gameplay splines that open up whole new design possibilities for staging action." Action is key in the movie-based adventure, in which Spidey goes mano a mano with mad scientist Dr. Octopus, among other known villains, such as Vulture, and a constant stream of hooligans who will never understand that Spider-Man is 10 times stronger than they are. When he's not pounding baddies, Spidey is swingin across rooftops, sticking to buildings and leaping great distances—all of the activities you'd expect from everyone's favorite wall-crawler.

Tactile Tactics

In addition to his standard punches and kicks, Spider-Man can perform eight unlockable special moves, which you can map to the R Button by tapping icons on the touch-sensitive lower screen. "We were able to totally avoid the obscure multibutton combo," said Bala. "As a result, players have a lot more freedom, many more accessible moves, and an unprecedented amount of control over Spider-Man." During boss encounters, the lower screen is used for direct control of the action. In some scenes, the screen displays a touch-controlled minigame-style activity, such as a bomb-diffusing exercise. In other scenes, it shows a new view of the action and challenges you to continue the fight with your finger or stylus on the screen.



One of Spidey's moves is a superpowered web blast. You select the icon from the touch screen, then execute the move with the R Button.

The hero faces his nemesis on three occasions; each time you'll use touch control to fend off the villain's attacks.

Extra Buttons, Evolving Control

In addition to the touch screen, the Nintendo DS has more buttons than the Game Boy Advance, which means more move options. The A Button executes baddie-bashing punches while the Y Button triggers high-flying kicks. The B Button controls jumps, and the X Button lets you send out a web shot and zip over to objects. As you continue, you'll learn more complex moves, such as the uppercut kick, which requires more complex button-mashing. In the heat of battle, a tap of the L Button will enact the hero's Spider Sense to slow down the bad guys, making it easier to get your shots in. If you keep the jabs and kicks steady in slow-mo, you'll remain in the superstate longer. Though the DS's touch screen may get all the glory, you can't underestimate what additional buttons mean for play control.

The Control Pad, four on-the-face buttons and two index-finger triggers give you unprecedented control for a handheld system—plow through Spider-Man's enemies in a nonstop run of superhero action!

Save Manhattan and Look Great Doing it

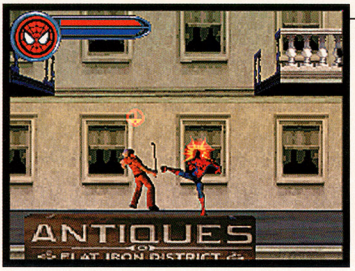
Pinpoint resolution, realistic lighting and shadows, and fluid movement make Spider-Man 2 as much fun to look at as it is to play. Says Bala, "We created some really cutting-edge 3-D graphics for the game, not possible on the GBA. Characters are all 3-D with tons of animation. Spidey himself has over 4,000 frames of animation, compared to the Spidey in Mysterio's Menace for the GBA [also developed by Vicarious Visions], who had around 500 frames of animation. We've thoroughly benchmarked the hardware to be able to get every ounce of that power to the player experience." The proof is on the screens. The game hits you with exciting visuals from moment one.

The webhead explores the big city, from the streets to the rooftops. Each area is rendered with depth and detail.

Interiors have a different look from the street scenes—they're a showcase for beautiful lighting effects.

Spidey's Power Is in Your Hands

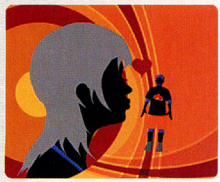
Asked to describe the experience of playing Spider-Man 2 in one word, Bala says "Addictive! Seriously, people just can't put it down once they pick it up! It's not something they've ever seen on a handheld, and the gameplay has so many layers to discover." The game's challenges are many and varied, from saving captives in a burning building to rounding up escaped convicts. The adventure begins at moderate difficulty, but gets harder as you get closer to bringing Doc Ock and his cronies to justice. Your fingers and thumbs will be working overtime in the ultimate superhero adventure on the ultimate handheld system.



Spidey's got the moves and he's not afraid to use them. That tingling sensation that you're feeling is the excitement of having Spider-Man's strength at your fingertips.

Feel the Magic: XY/XX

Let your fingers do the talking as Sega's SonicTeam shows you the dating ropes.



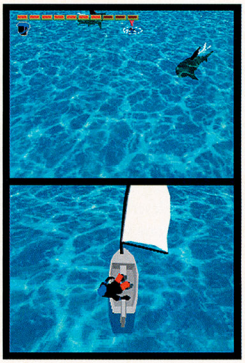
If there was ever a question as to how far a guy would go to get a girl, Feel the Magic: XY/XX provides the answer: it's a lot farther than any fellow would care to admit. From exterminating scorpions to riding unicycles across perilous catwalks, Feel the Magic's hero will do just about anything to attract the love of his life, whether she knows it or not. It's a classic story: boy sees girl, boy follows unwitting girl around until she notices him, girl gets kidnapped by a dude with a big purple head, boy and girl get stranded on a deserted island. It's the makings of real, long-lasting love. Veterans of Space Channel 5 and other quirky Sega titles will notice the same retro, pyschedelic style throughout Feel the Magic—the 1970s were obviously very good to the developers. Funky, silhouetted graphics veil some of the steamier imagery, such as scenes of bathtime fun and help with some hard-to-reach dress buttons. The game's narrative plays out through a series of minigames that pit our hero against difficult (and often highly surreal) challenges, all of which show off the DS's versatile controls.

You Don't Always Have to Be Touchy-Feely

There are avenues of play control that the video game world has not explored—until now. Many of the missions exploit the pinpoint accuracy of the DS touch screen, demanding a steady hand and a clear head (much like your first date). And you'll play some levels by yelling or by blowing at different strengths into the built-in microphone—arguably the most fascinating implementation yet of the DS's features. With Feel the Magic, Sega has stepped to the forefront of DS design and innovation.

At times, the action is so intense that one hand isn't enough. For example, on the Antlion level, you can alternate pushing up with both thumbs to save your hero and his companions from hungry pincers deep within a desert sinkhole.

In the horror-film-styled minigame Snake, your hero has been swallowed by a giant serpent. Guide him through the monster's slimy, acidic intestinal tract and into the waiting arms of his much cleaner companion.



As shown by the minigame Yacht, love and a little hot air can bring people together. A gentle blow into the DS's mic will fill your hero's sails and guide him past lurking sharks to his damsel in distress.

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Nintendo DS: Making Waves in Gaming

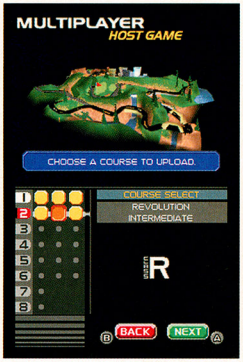
More for 2004

It's sort of a first for a Nintendo system launch. The Nintendo DS isn't just the Mario show, or even the Madden or Spidey show, for that matter. If you could single out a title, Sega's Feel the Magic: XY/XX (see page 40) sums up what the DS is about—sharing reins of innovation with other developers and letting them unleash their own groundbreaking titles. As you can tell from the additional games due out in '04—the vast majority of them right around launch—the DS is anything but business as usual.

Ridge Racer DS

Of the two racers lined up for launch, Namco's Ridge Racer DS falls squarely in the arcade-action arena. Power slides, 360s, time checkpoints, choppers that graze courses and an announcer who gets big mileage out of rolling Rs when he howls the game's name—Ridge Racer DS brings the very best of the wild racing series to the new handheld. The title lays claim to a racer first—installing a steering wheel on the touch screen—and there's even more under the game's hood.

For those who want to dive right into Grand Prix, Car Attack and Time Attack challenges, which are set on 20 tracks spanning three areas, Ridge Racer DS includes an "easy" setting that uses button control Players can come to grips with the "hard" and "expert" touch steering on their own terms. A racer has never been more hands-on—it's a great challenge.

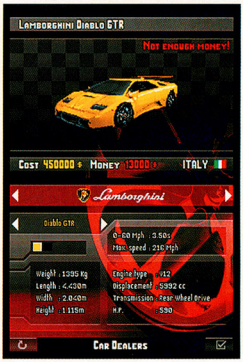


Up to six people can tap into a multitude of multiplayer options when they each have a copy of the game, but that's not the only way to play. A single game owner can broadcast a version of the game to DS players who don't have it, then compete on the tracks. The title is among the first to make liberal use of DS Download Play, a major feature of Nintendo's new baby.

Asphalt Urban GT

You won't realize how much handheld racers have suffered from lack of a prominent course radar until you've run a few laps with Ubisoft's graphically sweet Asphalt Urban GT, which lets you keep tabs on your competition with lower-screen radar. Asphalt's multiplayer capacity trails Ridge Racer's by two cars, but it packs in three wireless modes: single races and championships for up to four players, plus Cop Chase, a two-player game that's all about pulling over cars that just can't drive 65.

Nine international courses each bring different hazards to Asphalt Urban GT, from heavy New York traffic to café life in Paris, and even leftover cold-war clutter in sunny Chernobyl. And since the game puts crazy amounts of turbo in play, you'll be tearing around every corner like it's your last—even in Hong Kong, where 180-degree curves threaten whiplash.

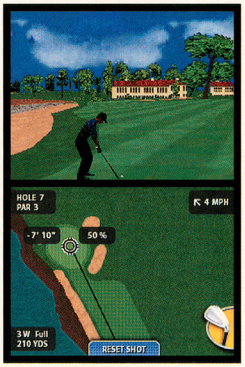


Asphalt Urban GT is hard-core about its vehicles: Jaguars, Lamborghinis and the like tear up its courses. You'll unlock them with prize money from the single-player Championship, one of five solo modes. Others include time attacks and road challenges that put certain vehicle classes—like SUVs, classic cars and urban racers—to the test.

Tiger Woods PGA Tour

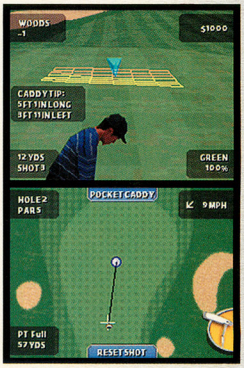
Even gamers who are not golf fanatics appreciate the level of detail and control that EA has brought to the Tiger Woods PGA Tour series. The franchise's Nintendo DS iteration exploits both standout features with expert use of the system's dual-screen, touch-screen setup. The top screen displays a from-the-grass 3-D view of the action while the bottom screen shows maps and meters that you can manipulate with the stylus. Great for playing at home or on the course while you're waiting for the foursome in front of you to finish a hole, TW PGA Tour continues its dominance of the sport in its new portable format.

Too much info for one screen—the Pocket Caddy gives you stats and tips for each hole, lets you choose your club and shot type, and shows you the progress of other players who are circling the same hole.



Lining up a shot is easy with two screens. The map on the bottom screen helps you pick your target area while the view on the top screen lets you know if it's a clear shot or if you'll have to deal with obstacles.

After you rub the meter on the right side of the bottom screen to build up a good boost, you swing through the ball by touching the stylus to the curved meter. A great shot is all in the wrist.

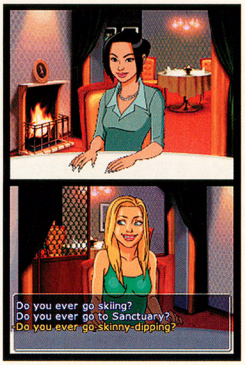


In the game's console version, you must flip back and forth between two views of the putting surface. But on the DS, you can see both views at once, allowing you to set up the putt with ease.

Sprung

We're titillated that Ubisoft rejected the working title Crush for its DS date-and-mate sim. It was *so* Brady Bunch; the slangier Sprung is more suggestive of what the game's about: choosing to play as a sporty dude or a ski bunny on a mountain vacation, then embarking on one of 50 flirtatious missions. Driven by vast amounts of choose-your-own misadventure text and what might best be called living illustrations of your character and his or her conversation partners—reacting with body language, winks, smiles and more visual cues—Sprung does an awesome job of capturing the hot pulse of teen-beat entertainment with dual-screened drama.

The game's content falls somewhere between *The OC* and *Sex and the City*. Actually Fox's *North Shore* might be the best parallel—one of the writers from the Hawaiian-resort TV drama, Colleen McGuinness, penned Sprung's spicy dialogue.



Ever ticked off someone in a text-selection RPG when you thought you were going to pay a compliment? Sprung makes it failsafe: when you highlight a response, your character will show the correlating body language with stunning emotional range.

Items sometimes speak louder than words in the war of the sexes. When you want to express your love (or hate), Sprung tucks in dozens of items, like roses, pepper spray and pamphlets on how to perform the Heimlich maneuver.

When you complete a mission, you'll unlock a piece of art that captures the moment perfectly. You can revisit all the magical memories—with telling titles like Big Decision and Stud—in the art gallery.

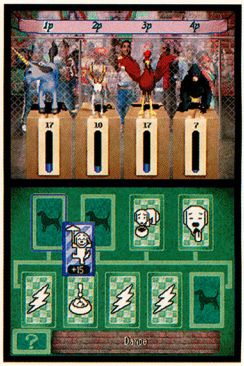
The Urbz: Sims in the City

EA's The Urbz, populating the DS, GBA and GCN almost simultaneously, has a unique edge in its handheld forms: just about anywhere you might daydream about a better life in the big city (which seems to happen more often once you actually *live* in a big city), The Urbz can be there to help you tap into your fantasies. And the DS version is even more convenient than its GBA sibling. Founded on the GBA game, the DS version gives the huge concept much more room to breathe (essential, given its very menu-dependent gameplay) and unprecedented ways to express the unique style of its city-dwellin' Sims.

The Urbz is filled with DS-ified flair, such as a touch-controlled turntable that drives character-building menus. We haven't been this engaged in simply selecting our identity since rolling out our initials in Super Monkey Ball.

The DS version enables multitasking: you can observe action on the upper screen while browsing info on the lower one. You can soak up your character's missions, jobs, reputation and inventory—all while taking a shower.

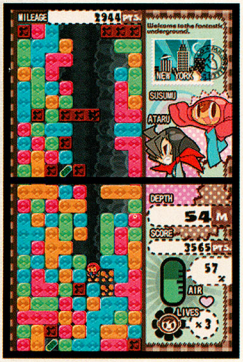
As you travel throughout the city and visit hot spots like Club Xizzle and Zeke's Zydeco Club, you'll make lots of friends (and enemies). You can tap through the Rep Group to check your standing with everyone you've met.



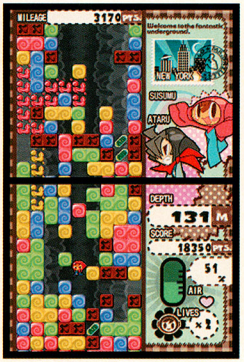
The DS version adds a region called Splicer Island, where you'll create a rare pet by carving DNA from amber using a touch-driven laser. After you make your creature, you can enter it into DS-exclusive minigames.

Mr. Driller: Drill Spirits

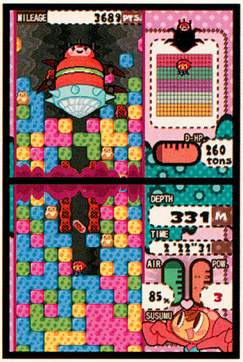
Namco isn't resting on its laurels. With one golden oldie, Pac-Man, reconceived as the DS brilliance known as Pac-Pix (see page 21), the company has been reworking another of its action-arcade concepts, Mr. Driller. The essence is the same: you'll control a drill-happy guy who burrows ever deeper into the earth, destabilizing the ground above and forcing you to outmaneuver the colored blocks that crash down—all while racing for oxygen tanks so you don't run out of air. What makes the action-arcade play truly groundbreaking is how Namco has tapped dual-screen design, touch control and five-player wireless multiplayer to make gamers feel the heat of the action.



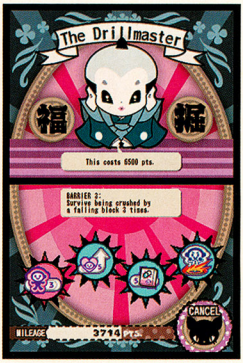
As you drill on the lower screen, layers that you've passed rise into the upper screen, at least until they collapse on you. With such a vertical descent, you'll see debris coming long before it crushes you flat.



You can press the buttons to control the driller, but using the stylus to break obstacles—once for colored blocks, several times for brown rocks—makes the frantic jackhammer action way more intense.



The game has three solo modes: In Mission Driller, you must drill to a set depth. Time Attack Driller has you racing to beat your personal best. In Pressure Driller, you'll face a maniacal drill that's trying to grind you to goo.



You can spend earnings in the Drillmaster's store to buy gear that will help you shrug off falling blocks and get more air from capsules, among other effects. As you take on deeper missions, you'll need the help.

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EXTREME URBAN RACING

- Race arcade-style through 9 urban environments or trick out more than 25 dream cars from Lamborghini, Jaguar, Audi, and more.
- Challenge up to three friends using DS Wireless Communications, and watch them choke on your exhaust on the bottom screen of your Nintendo DS™.

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Ping Pals

At a glance, THQ's Ping Pals may seem like it shares much in common with PictoChat. Typing? Check. With pictures? Check. But Ping Pals is starting a 16-player chat revolution of its own by throwing avatars (the faces you put on your wireless presence) into the mix. The first time you start up a new Ping Pals file, you'll get a random handful of items to use for engineering your "boy face," and others for dolling up your "girl face" (which gender you choose is your business). You may need to get by during your early sessions with killer shades but bad hair, but soon you'll earn the coin, through single- and multiplayer minigames, to reinvent yourself.

Players who have their own game cards will see the maximum personality from each other's avatars. You can also broadcast a scaled-down Ping Pals to wannabes via DS Download Play, then take 'em on in chat games to earn cash for yourself.

No worries if you have to go it solo—you can play minigames with AI avatars to earn money. In the single-player Top Ten, for instance, you'll be given a category then have to type in your guesses of which 10 words fit the concept. It's a bit like Family Feud.

We haven't been so addicted to video game shopping since Animal Crossing. Every day, the store will have new items on the rack, from hairdos and shirts to music and background images. You may have to pay through the nose for the best stuff.

Rayman DS

Ubisoft has always played hardware like a harp with its Rayman series—its developers have achieved some of the most artful effects from every system that Rayman has graced. In addition, Rayman's most recent appearances on both the Nintendo GameCube and Game Boy Advance showed off seriously mind-blowing innovation in GCN-GBA connectivity. Based on pedigree alone, the game remains one of our most anticipated 2004 DS titles. Though we haven't received a preview copy to go hands-on yet, new screens reveal that the platformer is living up to the series's high eye-candy standard. Expect more details next month.

We've been able to glean that Rayman DS is using the lower screen to show the hero's emotional state—though we don't know why he's so surprised to bump into his persistent enemies, the pirates.

Staring down the decomposed belly of some beast, however, we'd share Rayman's apparent concern. But when you're a platforming hero, you can't pick and choose what you use for bridges.

Mario and company won't be the only platforming characters to go for a swim on the DS this year—Rayman will take the dive in his adventure. It must be the lack of limbs that makes him such a flexible hero.

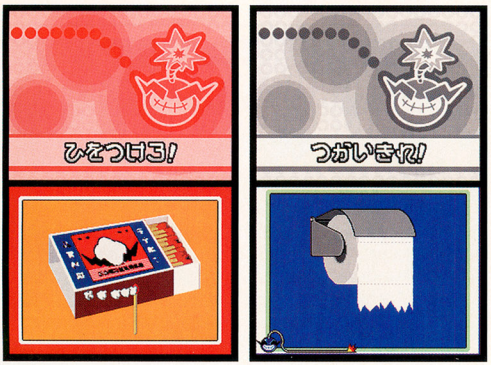
Nintendo DS: Making Waves in Gaming

Into the Future

For months, you had only the encouraging news that 120 DS titles were in the works; but the dam finally broke in early October, when Reggie Fils-Aime—Nintendo's executive veep of sales and marketing—revealed much more than launch titles at the Nintendo's Gamer's Summit. He reaffirmed that third-party publishers had big blockbusters in development, such as Square Enix's DS versions of Final Fantasy III and Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles, and casually dropped the bombshell that Nintendo is developing a Legend of Zelda: Four Swords game for the system. The following pages give you a peek at many of Nintendo's own DS games*, some of which it'd kept under tight wraps, that are well under way. Long-running series like Mario Kart will be transformed by the system's power, and entirely new creations—like the eeire Another—will manifest on the DS.

Mario Kart DS: We're revved up for Ridge Racer DS and Asphalt Urban GT, but Mario Kart holds a special place in the the hearts of racers who like to engage in all-out warfare against competitors—and laugh about it. We can't wait to start throwing banana peels in our wireless multiplayer sessions.

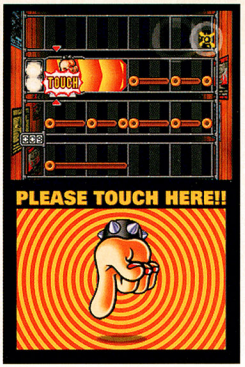
Advance Wars DS: The acclaimed military-tactics series is a natural for wireless multiplayer onslaughts. What's surprising is how Advance Wars will divide and conquer the dual screens: you'll command the stratosphere on the upper screen while engaging in land skirmishes on the lower one. The war can't start soon enough.



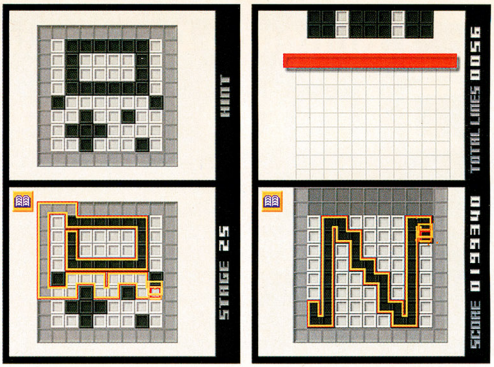
WarioWare, Inc. DS: The short-attention-span game that reigns supreme as the GBA's most innovative is groping its way toward DS notoriety. You'll strike matches, empty toilet-paper rolls, jab at kitties and even pull the famous Mannequin Pis statue to make wee on a bonfire—all with DS touch control. Wario truly knows no bounds.

Another: A major coup for players who want to see Nintendo take DS-centric risks on new series, Another is a gritty adventure steeped in the pain of a family mystery. You'll witness dramatic close-ups on the upper screen while the lower one gives a bird's-eye view of the character action. The DS mic and touch-control will both get a workout in Another.

* Working titles only



Jam with the Band: Jam's catwoman has already turned us into groupies of this stylish, stylus-driven game. It'll have huge support for DS Download Play, so you'll never lack bandmates—everyone simply grabs an instrument for a wireless blowout.



One-Line Puzzle: Just ask Tetris—sometimes the simplest-looking games hold the greatest potential for addiction. Nintendo's upcoming puzzle game, which has something to do with scrawling lines to flip tiles, could well deliver the goods.

Yoshi's Touch & Go: Baby Mario joins Yoshi in this stylus-guided romp, but don't call it a baby game. Drawing cloud banks to create paths and shut down foes, all while the screen scrolls at a merciless clip, is high-pressure business.

Nintendogs: Can't . . . resist . . . puppies. You'll use both touch and voice command to teach your dogs tricks and train them to respond to vocal calls. All the fun of puppies but with no mess.

Animal Crossing DS: Animal Crossing holds immense promise on the DS. We know few details, but the highly customizable and extremely social GCN game seems like it was born to make the leap to a wireless-multiplayer system.

The Ripple Effect Spreads—Starting November 21

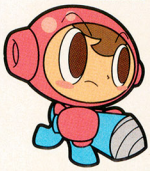
Between the titles in Game Watch and all those in our DS feature, we count over 30 games exposed for their dual-screened glory in this issue alone. In Volume 188, we'll have news on more DS groundbreakers that will make a big impact on the DS scene in early 2005. A sea change in videogames is on the way. Though we'll all look back years from now and reminisce about the good ol' days of one-screened gaming—like the ancients still marvel about getting their first TV—for the next few weeks, let's just revel in making history.

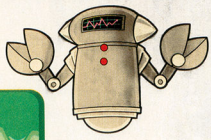
You're racing against time.

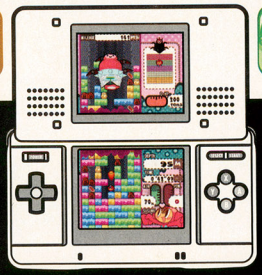
You're running out of air.

You have a pink football head.

You're Mr. Driller.







The addictive action-puzzle game is now on Nintendo DS,™ with wireless multiplayer support for up to 5 players.*

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*Note: Wireless multiplayer gameplay requires each player to have their own Nintendo DS system and a copy of the game.

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THE REAL DEAL ON POKER SIMS

Over the past several years, the game of poker has experienced a meteoric rise in popularity. Before that, it was viewed as the game of choice for men looking for danger—cowboys, con men and hustlers played for big stakes. However, with the success of televised events such as the World Poker Tour and various celebrity tournaments, poker has stepped out of the back-room shadows and into the forefront of pop culture. And the stakes have only gotten higher—the most recent winner of the famous World Series of Poker beat out over 4,000 competitors to win more than five million dollars.

Naturally, the more people see poker on TV, the more interested they are in trying the game for themselves. Small-stakes home games are springing up all over, and on Saturday nights, local card rooms are packed with people, cash in hand, anxious to grab a seat and some chips. With this kind of demand, video- game companies see a fresh market for new titles that emulate the big-money tournaments people are watching and reading about. The Game Boy Advance is fertile ground for poker simulation—the ease and mobility of a handheld system allow players to see a few hands while waiting for a bus or finishing lunch, or as a warm-up before entering a real-stakes tournament. Titles such as Texas Hold 'Em from Majesco and World Championship Poker from Crave offer the same fast-paced action as a real-world game without the wallet-emptying risk. More games are on the horizon, as well—Telegames intends on releasing a Nintendo DS update to its Ultimate Card Games series, which will include multiplayer wireless play, and Crave plans on making a GCN version of World Championship Poker. All of the titles feature many ways to play, including regular games and tournaments, and limit and no-limit betting structures. The art of bluffing and reading tells may not be fully realized in the electronic versions, but the game is still the same—bluff, check-raise and drag huge pots to earn money and build a hefty career bankroll.

In Texas Hold 'Em, play against a full table of opponents in either a casual limited stakes game, or in all-or-nothing no-limit tournaments. The presentation is simple, allowing for fast, exciting competition.

World Championship Poker offers more than just Hold 'Em—play three other variations of poker, as well as blackjack, video poker and the slots. The career mode keeps track of your earnings for all of the games you've played.

Although casino-based video games have been around for quite a while, they have concentrated mostly on games such as blackjack and roulette, in which the player competes against the house (the casino). But poker is a different animal—the player competes only against the other players at the table. All of the current and upcoming poker video games feature Texas Hold 'Em (or Hold 'Em), currently the most common variation of poker. The rules are identical to those of the games shown on television, and Hold 'Em dominates casino play—it accounts for at least 80% of card-room poker action. The reason is simple: the rules are easy, and the structure allows for novice players to have monster winning sessions. Of course, for the same reasons, the great players also like Hold 'Em—they exploit their opponents' lack of knowledge to pad their own pockets. If you are new to the game, the following tips will help you outswim the card sharks.

1. Play fewer hands.
When competing against many opponents, play as few as 20% of the hands you are dealt. Loosen your starting-hand requirements against smaller groups.

2. Don't cold-call.
If you call after a person has bet and another person has raised, meaning you are calling two bets, that's a cold-call. In such situations, raise your best hands and fold everything else.

3. Don't bluff too often.
The purpose of bluffing is to make people fold when they would otherwise call. If you are up against players unlikely to fold (as is common in video-game poker), don't try to bluff them out of the pot.

4. Raise your best hands.
Novice players try to trap opponents by playing their top hands coyly and simply calling. This is often a mistake—a raise will knock out opponents who could have caught up later on.

5. Pay attention to the size of the pot.
Every move you make relates to how much you stand to earn if you win. For example, if you have four-to-one odds to win a hand, make sure there are at least four dollars in the pot for every dollar you plan to put in.

2005

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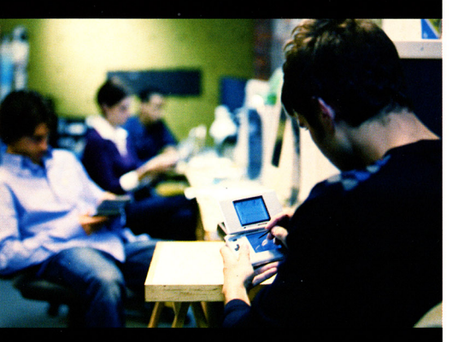

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AND 'DA OTHER TURTLE.
AND 'DA OTHER TURTLE.
AND 'DA OTHER TURTLE.

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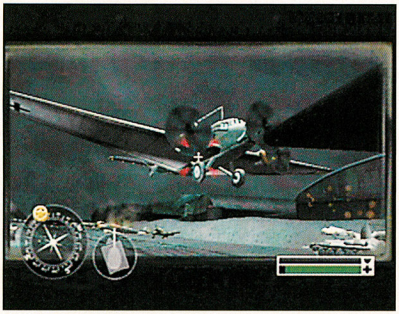
Power Previews

This month's Power Previews features a potpourri of titles, including a World War II-themed first-person shooter, an action-RPG based on a popular fighting franchise, an endearing platformer for the GBA and a bizarre cel-shaded adventure that continues to elude our comprehension. Whatever your pleasure, we've got something for everyone. Unless you're really into croquet games or hardcore cooking simulators. In that case, we've got nothin'. Sorry.

Call of Duty: Finest Hour



After receiving countless accolades on the PC, Activision's Call of Duty franchise is storming the console front with an original game for the GCN. A first-person shooter set on the battlefields of World War II, Call of Duty: Finest Hour enables players to experience the war from the perspective of American, British and Russian soldiers through three interwoven campaigns. Missions range from epic battlefield conflicts involving hundreds of troops to covert tactical strikes on key enemy positions. AI squadmates will fight alongside you, watching your back and providing cover fire as you move toward your objectives. Some battles also involve vehicular combat—you'll join a Russian tank battalion ordered to capture a Nazi airfield (shooting down the Luftwaffe as they try to take off), and hop in the back of a British jeep, manning the machine gun on a wild ride through the deserts of North Africa.

The action is presented with a cinematic flair, unsurprising since rookie developer Spark comprises more than 30 individuals who worked on EA's Medal of Honor series. The game's story was scribed by Michael Schiffer, who also worked on the original PC title and whose screenwriting credits include the films *Crimson Tide* and *Lean on Me*. Michael Giacchino, composer for the upcoming Pixar film *The Incredibles* and the television series *Alias*, worked with an 80-person orchestra and a 50-person choir to create a sweeping soundtrack worthy of a major motion picture.

For some insights into the game's development, we spoke to producer Scott Langteau. You can also check out our review on page 136.

Nintendo Power: *The first Call of Duty title established itself as a great PC game. What considerations did you make in developing Call of Duty: Finest Hour for consoles?*

Scott Langteau: *It was actually very simple: make sure we create an experience that holds true to what gamers loved about the PC game, and deliver that on the consoles—not an easy job, mind you. This also comes with the emphasis that Finest Hour is not a port. Finest Hour is an all-new Call of Duty game for the consoles (new levels, new characters, new locations, new music, new sounds). Not to sound too heavy-handed or anything, but we want console gamers to kow that we built this game from the ground up for them. We needed to make sure we held true to what became the core tenets of the Call of Duty franchise developed in tandem with the PC game: no one fights alone (intense combat action where there are allies around you at all times whether they be infantry or vehicle), multiple character perspectives (there are six in Finest Hour) and multiple campaigns (we have Russian, British and American campaigns).*

NP: *What does the subtitle Finest Hour refer to?*

SL: *Good question. In a very literal sense, "Finest Hour" is actually a phrase that was used in addresses by both Winston Churchill and Dwight Eisenhower. Additionally, in a more metaphoric sense, people were really making the ultimate sacrifice. They were putting their lives on the line for something they believed in, or at least an ideal or a sense of duty in which they felt a calling or obligation. For many people, this happens rarely in their lifetime, or perhaps never. So moments such as these (the sacrifices made to defend one's beliefs or one's homeland) could very well be labeled as their finest hour.*

NP: *The Medal of Honor and Call of Duty games both have reputations for historical accuracy. What is the importance of realism in a World War II title?*

SL: *Actually, we always say we are "authentic" rather than accurate when talking about Call of Duty: Finest Hour, meaning we never try to absolutely depict a precise location or precise event or battle scenario exactly as it played out in history (we need to take certain liberties with level size and/or mission objectives for design/hardware limitations, etc.). However, we are authentic in the sense that the timeframes and locations are historically correct, as well as the design and build of the uniforms and weaponry. What we put in front of you looks and feels like it should if you went back in time to the '40s. hat said, it is incredibly important to any form of entertainment that you remain true to the world you are creating. If you're setting up a war universe and helicopters hadn't been invented yet, but you had one swoop in and rescue you—you've just broken one of the rules of creating a "reality based" piece of fiction, and you let down those people who've come to trust in and understand the world you've put in front of them. In a war game like Finest Hour, it's also important just from a purely immersive standpoint. You need to feel like you're there and what you're seeing is legitimate, and dangerous.*

NP: *What makes World War II such an engaging setting for a game?*

SL: *WWII occupies a pretty unique place in the history of war, and I think the main factor that makes it an excellent setting for a game is that during WWII there was a very clear depiction of good vs. evil. A very moral conflict where the enemy was led by a genocidal, hate-spewing dictator—who dabbled in weapons of mass destruction and the occult just for good measure. The Nazi regime is almost a caricature of evil, so it just feels good to join in the battle to beat them.*

NP: *Finest Hour allows players to participate in the war from three Allied perspectives. Did you consider letting players join on the other side of the conflict?*

SL: *Actually, that question has come up on a number of occasions. I'm not really sure how I feel about that subject myself. I know playing as the Axis is something that intrigues gamers, but given the integrity we are always trying to uphold with Finest Hour, we've never felt it was the "right" thing to do.*

NP: *What's the key to making realistic battle fun to participate in from a gameplay perspective?*

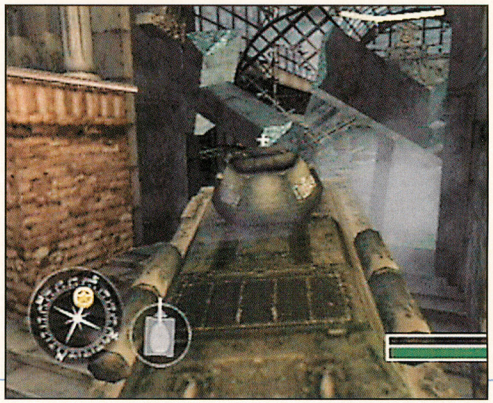
SL: *Call of Duty: Finest Hour is all about action, action, action! If you were truly in a real-time war scenario in the '40s, chances are you'd spend 15 hours sitting in a trench freezing while waiting for something to happen. In Finest Hour we take players to those moments when they really need to kick in high gear and save their hides and those of their buddies. A game implies you've got something to do, and that's what's important—that we give you plenty to look at and plenty to be a part of … and in Finest Hour, we're throwing it at you all of the time. INCOMING! TAKE COVER!*

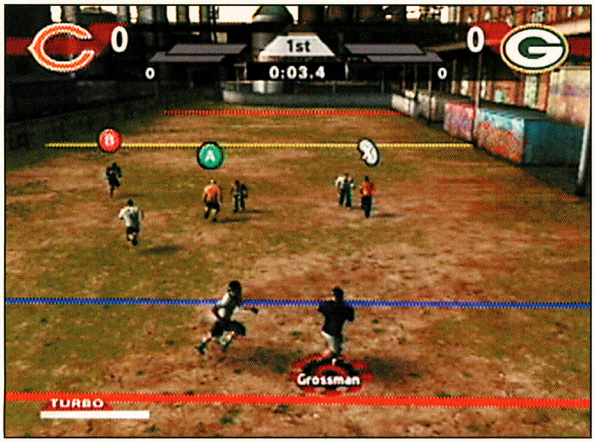
NP: *What new features that you haven't included in previous titles are you most pleased with?*

SL: *Tanks, baby. Tanks! While they were amazingly difficult to make a part of the game, I think they pay off in a big way by adding greater depth. They required special physics, special AI, special targeting—you name it. They were needy and affected many other things taking place and existing onscreen in the same place. However, they were worth it! I think our Sherman and T-34 tank missions are really fun to play (they're definitely among my favorites in the game).*

NP: *How would you describe Finest Hour's art style? How does the look of the game contribute to the playing experience?*

SL: *Can I say, "Beautiful and deserving of serious recognition?" Just kidding (well, not really). In all seriousness, though, with Call of Duty: Finest Hour we've always strived for heightened realism, from our character models and animation right down to our environments. We take everything and make it a touch larger than life (more dramatic hit and death animations, etc.). We really want the experience to read from a distance as well as up close. I remember one article mentioning that our character hands were too big (which was something the art director and I wrestled with), but we made the call because we wanted you to really be able to see that enemy in the distance frantically reload his weapon or gesture madly—and the decision paid off. On the environment side, I believe we have some of the most beautiful environments ever (the Red Square level is a perfect example). It's difficult to say, because we strive for very realistic structure and texturing, and yet they feel a bit romanticized, too—maybe that's just me, but there's something about them that makes you enjoy being in them. There's a point where the player's on an exterior catwalk near the end of the Red Square level and can literally turn 360 degrees around and look over a destroyed Stalingrad. The level was built by my lead artist Dave Prout, and it just doesn't get any better than that moment. Look for it and tell me what you think of the art style.*





The sequel to NFL Street takes the formula from the original game and goes crazy with it. Players can now jump off the walls to make catches 15 feet in the air or hurdle defenders. New double Gamebreakers unfold in dramatic fashion, with running backs launching themselves off of lead blockers, and linebackers throwing defensive backs over the line to force turnovers. EA Sports Big has even pumped up the style quotient, introducing a host of new moves to show off your mad skills as you make your way to the end zone.

Volume two also plays up the street theme quite a bit more than its predecessor. In Own the City mode, you'll create your own player, recruit a team and compete in a series of challenges to build your reputation and dominate the neighborhood. Each victory rewards you with development points that you'll use to improve your character's abilities. Following in the footsteps of other recent EA titles, the game also lets you earn credits to spend on tattoos, hairstyles and licensed gear. It's important to look your best while you take your opponents to school. When your player has nothing left to prove on the streets, you'll be able to move him up to the professional gridiron by importing him into Madden 2006. Other game modes include a variety of street events such as Crush the Carrier and Jump Ball Battle, plus the NFL Gauntlet, in which you'll take on every team to unlock new fields and NFL legends.

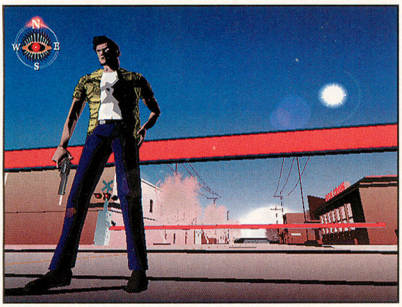
The most significant on-field addition is definitely the ability for offensive players to perform special moves off the walls, but there are enhancements on the other side of the ball, as well. On defense, you can press the L Button to call an audible, then press R to predict what type of play the offense is going to run. If you guess correctly, you'll boost your defensive attributes for the play; if you're wrong, your attributes will decrease.

VIRTUA QUEST

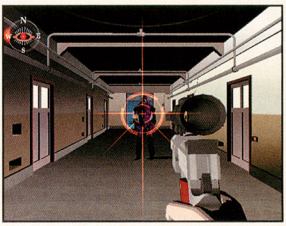
Sega's upcoming action-RPG (due January 11) places a heavy emphasis on the action part of the equation. In fact, the game is more like a story-driven beat-'em-up with RPG trappings. As you roam through the virtual world known as the Nexus, you'll duke it out with the minions of the Judgment 6 syndicate via a combat system inspired by developer AM2's popular Virtua Fighter series. The controls have been simplified quite a bit to appeal to a wider audience, but you can still pull off some pretty impressive combos, thanks in large part to your character's retractable Energy Wire. When you knock an enemy into the air, you can use the Energy Wire to pull yourself toward him, then deliver a flurry of strikes before he even hits the ground.

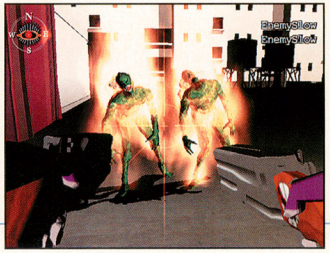
Over the course of the game, you'll learn more than 45 new moves by sparring with the Virtua Fighters themselves. You can also summon the legendary combatants to deliver a powerful strike that annihilates every foe in sight. Destructible environments and the ability to slow time give additional depth to the fisticuffs.

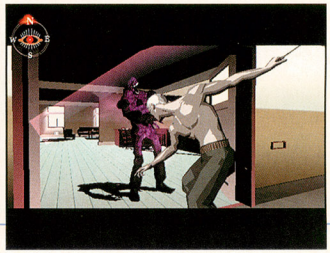
KILLER 7



Capcom still isn't ready to let anyone play Killer 7, but they did pass along some brand-spankin'-new screenshots. You can also check out a crazy new trailer for the game at www.nintendo.com.



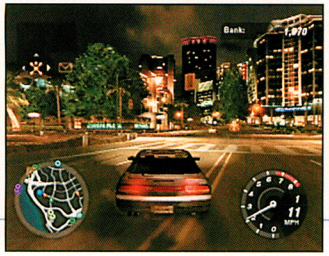


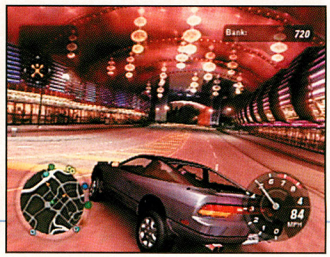


NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND 2

The sequel to last year's best-selling racer puts you in a wide-open city with five distinct, interconnected neighborhoods and over 120 miles of drivable road. Career mode keeps you immersed in the game's world by allowing you to initiate races from the streets rather than a series of menus. The open-ended structure gives you the freedom to progress as you see fit and to focus on the types of events you prefer (among those offered are circuit, drag, drift, sprint and outrun competitions). The story, which stars Brooke Burke as your agent, unfolds via animated comic-book-style cinematics. It's an interesting look, though it does seem like an underutilization of Ms. Burke's considerable talents—especially in the face of Namco's recent SRS: Street Racing Syndicate.

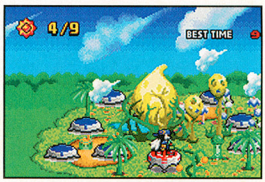
Gearheads can trick out their rides with hundreds of new licensed aftermarket performance upgrades, then fine-tune everything from the gear ratio to the suspension (you can even tweak your setup differently for each race type). Twice as many visual customizations as in last year's game give you more opportunities to impress potential sponsors.

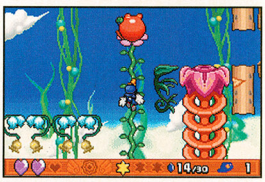


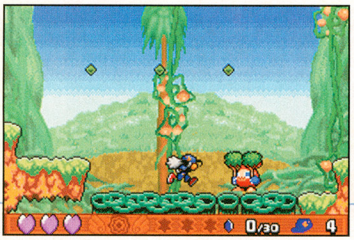


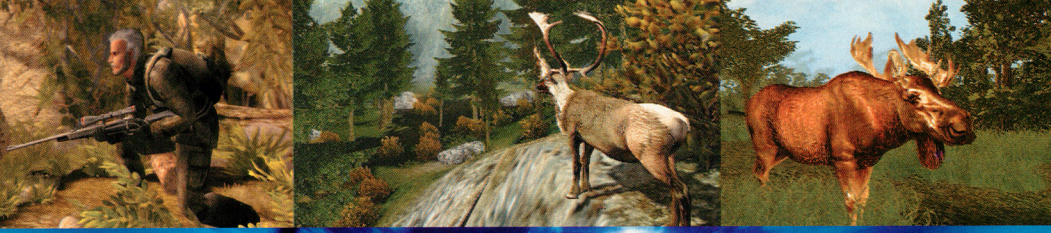
KLONOA 2: DREAM CHAMP TOURNAMENT

As a result of Namco's renewed focus on the handheld market, Klonoa 2 is finally coming stateside in February. Like previous games in the series (which have garnered quite the cult following), this GBA sequel features perfect controls, bright, colorful graphics and a difficulty curve that eases you into the action at just the right pace. What really separates Klonoa from the rest of the platforming pack, however, is the ingenious level design built around the floppy-eared hero's ability to grab enemies and throw them or use them to jump higher. Each of the game's 45 stages plays out like a series of puzzles, challenging both your reflexes and your mental prowess.









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resident evil 4

Delve deeper into one of the most terrifying games ever crafted. We have the latest details on the sequel that will shake you to your core.

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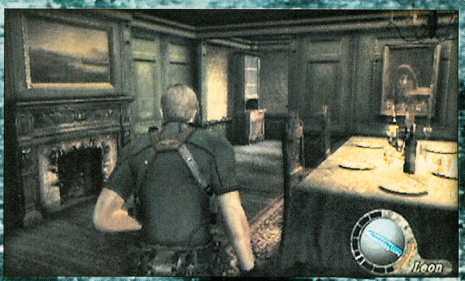
Reawakening

Since the Electronic Entertainment Expo in May, Capcom has kept Resident Evil 4 largely under wraps save for a trickle of screenshots. Recently, however, the company debuted a new trailer for the GCN-exclusive fright fest at the Tokyo Game Show (check it out at nintendo.com) and sent us an updated demo of the game that goes much deeper than the E³ version. After spending four of the most heart-pounding hours in recent memory with the disc (and ruining innumerable pairs of trousers), any doubts we may have had that the game is going to kick our asses come January 11 have been obliterated.

Like its predecessors, the latest Resident Evil is all about survival horror, but it pulls the genre—which director Shinji Mikami and his team created—in a bold new direction. Instead of scaring you with incidentals like dogs jumping through windows, it gets under your skin and creates a lingering sense of unease with barren, grimy environments and a disturbing journey into the unknown. You aren't dealing with zombies anymore. The enemies that confront you weren't concocted by the Umbrella Corporation. The perils you'll face in the eastern European countryside are more dangerous than anything you encountered in Raccoon City, and the horrors you'll witness more gruesome. The rules have changed, ushering in a new brand of Evil.



Evil Transformed

The biggest difference is that the crazed townsfolk known as the Ganado (which means "cattle" or "livestock" in Spanish) are a lot more intelligent and resourceful than the undead, and every bit as relentless. And just when you think you've got them figured out, they'll throw something new at you (literally). If you try to hole up inside a house, they'll use ladders to climb onto the roof and break through the windows on the second floor. So when we scaled a watchtower, we pointed our shotgun down the ladder and waited for the Ganado to follow us. Instead, they hurled Molotov cocktails into the tower and forced us to come back down. Later, we accidentally got Leon's foot stuck in a bear trap, and as our hero tried to escape, one of the Ganado lit a stick of dynamite and tossed it at him. The result, as you might imagine, wasn't pretty.

The enemy AI isn't the only change; a lot of other Resident Evil conventions have been altered or improved upon to trim away some of the annoyances of the series. As we discussed in Volume 182, the game shares the same control scheme as its predecessors, but it feels much more natural thanks to the camera's fixed position over Leon's shoulder. The new view enables you to aim your weapon with pinpoint precision—you can even shoot that aforementioned stick of dynamite while the Ganado's still holding it to make it blow up in his face. You can also double-tap the A Button to kick open doors (you never know what's waiting for you on the other side), and you don't have to twiddle your thumbs while the game loads every time you move to a new room. You'll still have to find the occasional key or emblem, but looking for it is a lot less tedious when a guy wearing a burlap sack over his head is chasing you with a chainsaw.

Other notable changes include a reworked inventory system (see the sidebar below), and a new kind of herb—yellow—that will expand your life bar when mixed with green herbs. Additionally, there are new ways to replenish your health. Chickens will occasionally lay eggs that you can eat, or you can fish for dinner with the armament of your choice (grenades are particularly fun). You'll also find coins that you can use to purchase new weapons and upgrades from a traveling merchant. Finally, though you'll still use typewriters to save your game, you'll no longer need an ink ribbon to do so.

Get Equipped

Resident Evil 4's new inventory system will allow you to carry however many items fit inside the 6 x 10 grid. Some equipment, such as a bazooka, can fill two entire rows, whereas others take up only a single square. You can rotate items and try to squeeze them into the space available, which gives you a lot more flexibility than in previous games. There are no item boxes in which to store your belongings, but provisions aren't quite as scarce as before. Not only will you find ammo, herbs and coins in the crates and barrels strewn about, but enemies will sometimes drop them, as well.

Care for a Swim?

Our sneak peek ended with one of the most amazing boss battles we've ever fought. After you witness the Ganado dispose of a corpse by feeding it to a giant lake serpent, you'll take a motorboat out onto the water to investigate. Unfortunately, the boat's anchor gets snagged on the serpent's hide, causing the unhappy beast to pull you along behind it. The serpent moves at a fast clip, and as it whips you around, you have to pick up a harpoon and try to throw it at the monster. You've also got to do your best to steer the boat; should you run into a piece of flotsam, you'll be tossed overboard and have to hammer the A Button to swim back to your vessel before the monster has you for dessert. (In an especially cool touch, you'll sometimes see Leon's breaststroke from the creature's point of view.) The physics during the encounter are remarkable; when the serpent dives underneath your boat and doubles back, your boat slows to a stop as the tension in the rope slackens, then whips around violently as the boss pulls you in the opposite direction. Once you finally slay the beast, the rope gets wrapped around Leon's foot and starts to tighten as the serpent sinks to the bottom of the lake. To avoid being pulled down with it, you must again tap the A Button repeatedly to cut the rope.

More Questions Then Answers

Though our extended play time brought about some interesting revelations (most of which we can't divulge—sorry, Capcom swore us to secrecy), much of Resident Evil 4's story remains shrouded in mystery. Johnny Depp look-alike Luis tells Leon that he used to be a Madrid police officer, but we still have no idea what he's up to. More importantly, when the topic of the incident at Raccoon City comes up, Luis mentions that his department had a sample of the T-Virus at its headquarters. We don't know what that will mean in the grand scheme of things, but it certainly has us thinking.

Another hot topic is the identity of the woman in the still below, from the Tokyo Game Show trailer. Many fans have theorized that it might be Leon's co-protagonist from Resident Evil 2, Claire Redfield; others think she looks more like former Umbrella agent Ada Wong, who also played a prominent role in RE2. Whatever her identity, the way she's framed in the shot seems designed to pique our curiosity.

Hungry for More

Now that we've gotten a better taste of Resident Evil 4, we're even more eager to play the rest of the game. The first few hours feel like they barely scratch the surface—we haven't yet set foot in the castle, found the president's daughter or battled the giant troll pictured in earlier screen shots. Based on what we've experienced so far, though, the game is absolutely deserving of all the hype. Its visual splendor serves not only to impress, but also to draw you in like few games can. It could be one of the defining titles of this generation—a game that elevates the art form. There's no better reason to own a GameCube.

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MADDEN NFL 2005
MADDEN CARDS—PAGE 66

This month's Classified Information is filled to the brim with codes and strategies for a potpourri of recent GCN releases. We've got a comprehensive list of Force Metals for Mega Man X: Command Mission, pennants and Madden Cards for EA's respective pigskin titles, cheats for the latest game starring California's governor and assorted other "things of that nature."

MADDEN NFL 2005 GCN
MARIO POWER TENNIS GCN
MEGA MAN X: COMMAND MISSION GCN
NCAA FOOTBALL 2005 GCN
SRS: STREET RACING SYNDICATE GCN
TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION GCN
X-MEN LEGENDS GCN

MARIO POWER TENNIS — GCN

GAME, SET & MATCH

STRATEGY

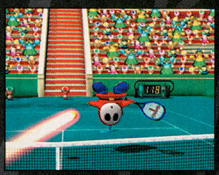
EARN BONUS COURTS, CHARACTERS AND MINIGAMES.

Mario and company's latest diversion features a bevy of unlockables that you'll earn by winning tournaments. In addition to the rewards listed on this page, you'll be treated to "outtakes" from the game's bizarre intro when you complete the final cup in one of the tournaments. Just be sure to bring your A game—the competition starts out fairly tame, but it heats up considerably as you rise through the ranks.

WORLD OPEN

The World Open is a traditional tennis tournament (as traditional as you can get with dinosaurs and giant hammers, anyway). The Mushroom Cup is played on a hard court, the Flower Cup on a clay court and the Star Cup on a grass court. As with all of the tournaments, you can play either singles, or doubles with a CPU partner.

TOURNAMENT	UNLOCKABLE
MUSHROOM CUP (SINGLES)	MECHA-BOWSER MAYHEM GAME
FLOWER CUP (SINGLES)	BALLOON PANIC GAME
STAR CUP (SINGLES)	FLY GUY (CHARACTER)
	STAR TOURNAMENT (SINGLES)
MUSHROOM CUP (DOUBLES)	COIN COLLECTORS GAME
FLOWER CUP (DOUBLES)	POWER-UP YOSHI'S POWER SHOT
STAR CUP (DOUBLES)	PARATROOPA (CHARACTER)
	STAR TOURNAMENT (DOUBLES)



Winning the Star Cup will not only add a new character to your roster; it will unlock an entire tournament.

GIMMICK MASTERS

As the name implies, each of the Nintendo-themed courts in the Gimmick Masters tournament adds a little something extra to the proceedings (such as ghosts that grab you on the Luigi's Mansion court). When you win a match in Gimmick Masters, the court that you played on will become available for Standard Tennis, Ring Shot and Item Battle matches in Exhibition mode.

TOURNAMENT	UNLOCKABLE
FIRE CUP (SINGLES)	BOWSER CASTLE COURT
THUNDER CUP (SINGLES)	WIGGLER (CHARACTER)
FIRE CUP (DOUBLES)	MARIO CLASSIC COURT
THUNDER CUP (DOUBLES)	PETEY PIRANHA (CHARACTER)

The key to success in the Gimmick Masters tournament is to use the wacky courts to your advantage. The trickiest venue is Delfino Plaza. Aim your shots at the Piranha Plant panels to cover your opponent's side of the court with goop, and stand on the FLUDD icons to wash away the goop on your side.

STAR TOURNAMENT

The Star Tournament is by far the toughest event in the game. You'll unlock it when you win the Star Cup in the World Open. Unlike the other tournaments, however, you won't receive a reward for winning each individual cup. You'll unlock the Ace difficulty level when you complete all three cups in the singles tournament, and you'll see a different collection of outtakes when you finish the doubles tournament.

NCAA FOOTBALL 2005 — GCN

▼ PENNANT FEVER — PASSWORDS

FILL OUT YOUR PENNANT COLLECTION.

Choose the My NCAA option from the main menu and select Pennant Collection. From there, press the Z and A Buttons simultaneously, then input one of the passwords listed below. If you enter it correctly, the pennant will be added to your collection and you'll have access to the corresponding team or cheat.

PASSWORD	PENNANT
THANKS	1ST AND 15 (REQUIRES OPPONENT TO GAIN 15 YARDS FOR A FIRST DOWN)
FUMBLE	2003 ALL-AMERICANS
ROLL TIME	ALABAMA ALL-TIME TEAM
BEAR DOWN	ARIZONA MASCOT TEAM
WOOPIGSOOIE	ARKANSAS ALL-TIME TEAM
WAR EAGLE	AUBURN ALL-TIME TEAM
U RAH RAH	BADGERS ALL-TIME TEAM
SIC EM	BAYLOR RATINGS BOOST
FOR	BLINK (REF SPOTS BALL SHORT FOR YOUR OPPONENT)
REGISTERING	BOING (INCREASES YOUR OPPONENT'S CHANCES OF DROPPING PASSES)
WITH EA	BUTTER FINGERS (INCREASES YOUR OPPONENT'S CHANCES OF FUMBLING)
DEATH VALLEY	CLEMSON ALL-TIME TEAM
GLORY	COLORADO ALL-TIME TEAM
TIBURON	CROSSED THE LINE (ALLOWS YOUR QB TO THROW THE BALL PAST THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE)
EA SPORTS	CUFFED (PREVENTS YOUR TEAM FROM FUMBLING OR THROWING INTERCEPTIONS)
GREAT TO BE	FLORIDA ALL-TIME TEAM
UPRISING	FSU ALL-TIME TEAM
HUNKER DOWN	GEORGIA ALL-TIME TEAM
RAMBLINWRECK	GT MASCOT TEAM
OSKEE WOW	ILLINOIS RATINGS BOOST
ON IOWA	IOWA ALL-TIME TEAM
RED AND GOLD	ISU MASCOT TEAM
HIKE	JUMBALAYA (ADDS POINTS TO YOUR SCORE WHEN YOUR PLAYER IS INJURED)
ROCK CHALK	KANSAS MASCOT TEAM
VICTORY	KANSAS STATE ALL-TIME TEAM
GEAUX TIGERS	LSU ALL-TIME TEAM
RAISING CANE	MIAMI ALL-TIME TEAM
GO BLUE	MICHIGAN ALL-TIME TEAM
RAH RAH RAH	MINNESOTA MASCOT TEAM
HOTTY TOTTY	MISS MASCOT TEAM
HAIL STATE	MISSISSIPPI STATE ALL-TIME TEAM
MIZZOU RAH	MIZZOU MASCOT TEAM
HOME FIELD	MOLASSES (INCREASES YOUR OPPONENT'S FATIGUE FACTOR)
GO GREEN	MSU MASCOT TEAM
GO PACK	NCSU MASCOT TEAM
GO BIG RED	NEBRASKA ALL-TIME TEAM
RAH RAH	NORTH CAROLINA ALL-TIME TEAM
GOLDEN DOMER	NOTRE DAME ALL-TIME TEAM
GO CATS	NU MACOT TEAM
KILLER NUTS	OHIO STATE ALL-TIME TEAM
BOOMER	OKLAHOMA ALL-TIME TEAM
QUACK ATTACK	OREGON ALL-TIME TEAM
GO POKES	OKLAHOMA STATE ALL-TIME TEAM
WE ARE	PENN STATE ALL-TIME TEAM
LETS GO PITT	PITTSBURGH ALL-TIME TEAM
BOILER UP	PURDUE ALL-TIME TEAM
ELITE 11	QB DUD (CAUSES YOUR OPPONENT'S PASSES TO BE HIGH AND WOBBLY)
GO CAROLINA	SOUTH CAROLINA MASCOT TEAM
NCAA	STIFFED (DOUBLES YOUR OPPONENT'S PENALTY YARDAGE FOR ONE GAME)
ORANGE CRUSH	SYRACUSE ALL-TIME TEAM
FOOTBALL	TAKE YOUR TIME (GIVES YOUR TEAM UNLIMITED TIME-OUTS)
BIG ORANGE	TENNESSEE ALL-TIME TEAM
HOOK EM	TEXAS ALL-TIME TEAM
GIG EM	TEXAS A&M ALL-TIME TEAM
FIGHT	TEXAS TECH RATINGS BOOST
2005	THREAD THE NEEDLE (NARROWS THE UPRIGHTS WHEN YOUR OPPONENT ATTEMPTS A FIELD GOAL)
MIGHTY	UCLA ALL-TIME TEAM
ON ON UK	UK MASCOT TEAM
FIGHT ON	USC ALL-TIME TEAM
WAHOOS	VIRGINIA ALL-TIME TEAM
TECH TRIUMPH	VIRGINIA TECH ALL-TIME TEAM
GO DEACS GO	WAKE FOREST MASCOT TEAM
BOW DOWN	WASHINGTON ALL-TIME TEAM
BLITZ	WHAT A HIT (INCREASES YOUR OPPONENT'S CHANCES OF GETTING INJURED)
ALL HAIL	WSU MASCOT TEAM
HAIL WV	WVU MASCOT TEAM

Enter the Rah Rah Rah password and strike fear into the hearts of your opponents with a team of terrifying, six-foot-tall gophers.

X-MEN LEGENDS — GCN

▼ XTREME MAKEOVER — CODE

EXPAND THE X-MEN'S WARDROBE.

You can unlock Xtreme Gear for some of the X-Men by pressing Up, Up, Right, Left, Down, Down, Start at the main menu. (You must input the directions on the Control Pad; the code won't work if you use the analog Control Stick). You'll also earn alternate costumes for Beast, Colossus, Cyclops, Iceman, Jean Grey, Magma, Nightcrawler, Storm and Wolverine when you beat the game for the first time. To switch to a different outfit, highlight the desired mutant on the character-select screen and press the X Button.

FORCE METAL GENERATOR

LEARN HOW TO REFINE EVERY FORCE METAL IN THE GAME.

Once Cinnamon joins your party at the end of Chapter 4, you can use her Force Metal Generator (FMG) to refine new Force Metals. To do so, Cinnamon must be at a certain level and you must have the required recipe, Force Metal Energy (FME) and ingredients. You'll receive recipes when you fulfill certain conditions, which are detailed on the in-game FMG screen. A description of the metal's effect won't appear until you've learned the recipe, and you won't see the name until you've acquired the metal at least once. To help you figure out which metals are which, the table below lists all 92 of them in the order they appear on the FMG screen in the game. Note that some Force Metals are unrefinable; you must obtain them via other means.

FORCE METAL	LEVEL	FME	INGREDIENTS
LE +100	5	100	REBOOT, WE +5
LE +300	10	500	REBOOT, WE +5
LE +500	15	3,000	BACKUP, WEAPON +10 x2
LE +1,000	30	30,000	BACKUP, BUILD LE, GAIN WE +10
WE +5	5	50	REBOOT, LE +100
WE +10	10	150	REBOOT, LE +300
WE GAIN +5	20	1,000	BACKUP, LE +100, WE +5
WE GAIN +10	30	5,000	BACKUP, LE +300, GAIN WE +5
WE GAIN +25	40	50,000	BACKUP, BUILD WE, GAIN WE +10, LE +1,000
POWER +1	1	100	BOOST POWER, SPEED +1
POWER +3	10	500	BOOST POWER, SPEED +3
POWER +5	20	3,000	BOOST POWER, SPEED +5
POWER +10	30	30,000	BOOST POWER, BUILD SPEED, SPEED +5
ARMOR +1	1	60	BOOST ARMOR, SHIELD +1
ARMOR +3	8	300	BOOST ARMOR, SHIELD +3
ARMOR +5	16	1,800	BOOST ARMOR, SHIELD +5
ARMOR +10	24	18,000	BOOST ARMOR, BUILD SHIELD, SHIELD +5
SHIELD +1	1	60	BOOST SHIELD, ARMOR +1
SHIELD +3	8	300	BOOST SHIELD, ARMOR +3
SHIELD +5	16	1,800	BOOST SHIELD, ARMOR +5
SHIELD +10	24	24,000	BOOST SHIELD, BUILD ARMOR, ARMOR +5
SPEED +1	1	100	BOOST SPEED, POWER +1
SPEED +3	10	500	BOOST SPEED, POWER +3
SPEED +5	20	3,000	BOOST SPEED, POWER +5
SPEED +10	30	30,000	BOOST SPEED, BUILD POWER, POWER +5
PROTECT +1	10	80	BOOST ARMOR, BOOST SHIELD, ARMOR +1, SHIELD +1
PROTECT +3	15	400	BOOST ARMOR, BOOST SHIELD, ARMOR +3, SHIELD +3
PROTECT +5	20	2,400	BOOST ARMOR, BOOST SHIELD, ARMOR +5, SHIELD +5
PROTECT +10	30	24,000	BOOST ARMOR, BOOST SHIELD, ARMOR +10, SHIELD +10
FULL SPECS +1	15	300	REBOOT, POWER +1, SPEED +1, PROTECT +1
FULL SPECS +3	20	1,500	REBOOT, POWER +3, SPEED +3, PROTECT +3
FULL SPECS +5	30	9,000	REBOOT, POWER +5, SPEED +5, PROTECT +5
FULL SPECS +10	40	90,000	REBOOT, POWER +10, SPEED +10, PROTECT +10
MASSIMO PLUS	—	—	UNREFINABLE (ACQUIRE WHEN MASSIMO JOINS)
ASSASSIN MIND	13	1,000	BOOST POWER x3, EAGLE EYE
EAGLE EYE	10	1,000	BOOST SPEED x3, ASSASSIN MIND
FAT SLICER	—	—	UNREFINABLE (ACQUIRE WHEN MARINO JOINS)
LIGHT AS A FEATHER	15	3,000	BOOST SPEED, BUILD SPEED, SPEED +1
SFM FRAGMENT ALPHA	—	—	UNREFINABLE (STEAL DURING GREAT REDIPS ROUND 1)
SFM FRAGMENT BETA	—	—	UNREFINABLE (STEAL DURING GREAT REDIPS ROUND 2)
FIRE GUARD	5	300	MEGA FIRE x3, PROTECT +1
FIRE RESIST	13	3,000	ULTRA FIRE x3, PROTECT +3
REVERSE FIRE	—	—	UNREFINABLE (DEPLOY MECHANILOIDS TO ULFAT FACTORY)

FORCE METAL	LEVEL	FME	INGREDIENTS
WATER GUARD	5	300	MEGA BLIZZARD x3, PROTECT +1
WATER RESIST	15	3,000	ULTRA BLIZZARD x3, PROTECT +1
REVERSE WATER	—	—	UNREFINABLE (DEPLOY MECHANILOIDS TO MELDA ORE PLANT)
THUNDER GUARD	5	300	MEGA THUNDER x3, PROTECT +1
THUNDER RESIST	15	3,000	ULTRA THUNDER x3, PROTECT +1
REVERSE THUNDER	—	—	UNREFINABLE (DEPLOY MECHANILOIDS TO GIMIALLA MINE)
VIRUS PROTECTION	3	80	VACCINE PROGRAM x3, LE +100
VIRUS BLOCK	12	400	VIRUS MISSILE, LE +300
BIND PROTECTION	8	30	ANTI-LOCK x3, LE +100
BIND BLOCK	12	400	TRACTOR NET, LE +300
FREEZE PROTECTION	8	30	WARM UP x3, LE +100
FREEZE BLOCK	12	400	CRYOGENIC, LE +300
BERSERK PROTECTION	3	80	COOLER x3, LE +100
BERSERK BLOCK	12	400	CRACKER, LE +300
BLIND PROTECTION	3	80	CLEAR VISION x3, LE +100
BLIND BLOCK	12	400	SMOKE MISSILE, LE +300
DOA PROTECTION	5	100	JUSTICE MISSILE, LE +100
DOA BLOCK	15	500	DOA PROTECTION x3, LE +300
FIREWALL	20	3,000	LIQUID SUFFOCATION, CHAFF, HACKING
BLOCK ALL	—	—	UNREFINABLE (DEPLOY MECHANILOIDS TO TIANNA CAMP)
RESIST	10	1,000	RUST MISSILE, MELT MISSILE, DRILL MISSILE, SLIME MISSILE
SUPER RESIST	20	3,000	RESIST x2, PROTECT +3
INFINITE RESIST	—	—	UNREFINABLE (DEPLOY MECHANILOIDS TO CENTRAL TOWER)
MINUS METAL 10	20	1,000	SELF-REPAIR, UNLOCK LIMITER
MINUS METAL 20	30	3,000	SELF-REPAIR x2, UNLOCK LIMITER
AUTO SUB TANK	20	1,500	BUILD LE, LE +300, VENGEFUL COUNTER
AUTO RECOVER	10	500	REBOOT, BAIT
AUTO BARRIER	20	3,000	BUILD ARMOR, BUILD SHIELD, PROTECT +3
BLUFF	—	—	UNREFINABLE (ACQUIRE WHEN SPIDER JOINS)
ZERO SHIFT	28	7,000	LIQUID SUFFOCATION, AUTO BARRIER, PROTECT +3
X HEART	—	—	UNREFINABLE (ACQUIRED AFTER FIRST FIGHT)
DECOY	2	500	REBOOT, BACKUP
CHANGE IMPACT	17	4,000	BUILD WE, WE +5, ITEM CAPTURE
END TO ALL	19	10,000	F5 CANCELLER, JUSTICE MISSILE, HAWKEYE
F5 CANCELLER	7	300	JUSTICE MISSILE, EAGLE EYE
ANALYZER	—	—	UNREFINABLE (PURCHASE FROM SHOP DURING CHAPTER 2)
LEARNING AID	16	5,000	GET EXP+, ITEM CAPTURE
CAUTION	30	2,000	NEUTRALIZER -10, ATTRACTOR
ATTRACTOR	4	100	EXODUS x2
INITIATIVE	21	500	CAUTION, CUTTING EDGE
NEUTRALIZER -10	—	—	UNREFINABLE (PURCHASE FROM CUMIN'S SECRET SHOP)
NEUTRALIZER -20	—	—	UNREFINABLE (PURCHASE FROM CUMIN'S SECRET SHOP)
NEUTRALIZER -30	—	—	UNREFINABLE (PURCHASE FROM CUMIN'S SECRET SHOP)
SELF-REPAIR	15	8,000	BUILD LE, LE +300, POWER CHARGE
EXODUS	2	100	BOOST SPEED x9
CUTTING EDGE	20	3,000	CAUTION, GOOD LUCK
LUCKY GIRL	35	10,000	GOOD LUCK, GET FME +1
GOOD LUCK	10	700	GAIN HYPER, ITEM CAPTURE
MONOPOLY	35	99,999	LEARNING AID, CUTTING EDGE, GET EXP+

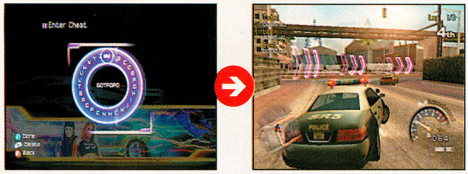
SRS: STREET RACING SYNDICATE — GCN

▼ SWEET RIDES — PASSWORDS

UNLOCK SECRET CARS, CHEATS AND VINYL.

Sorry, despite the exhaustive efforts of the Classified Information staff, we couldn't find any codes to unlock the girlfriend videos in Namco's street racer. It looks like you'll have to earn those the old-fashioned way. But we did manage to round up some other useful, if less captivating, cheats. To bring up the password-entry prompt, press Up, Down, Left, Right at the main menu.

PASSWORD	EFFECT
FIXITUP	FREE CAR REPAIR
LETMEGO	GET AWAY WITH A WARNING THE FIRST THREE TIMES A COP PULLS YOU OVER IN STREET MODE
GORETRO	PAC-MAN VINYL
GOTPOPO	POLICE CAR
IGOTGST	MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE GT-S
MYTCGTS	TOYOTA CELICA '04 GT-S
RENESIS	MAZDA RX-8
SICKGDB	SUBARU IMPREZA STi
SICKJZA	TOYOTA SUPRA 3.0L RZ



The cars that you unlock are available immediately in Arcade mode, but you have to buy them before you can get behind the wheel in Street mode.

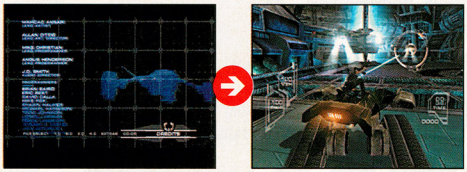
TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION — GCN

▼ HE'S BACK — CODES

PREPARE FOR JUDGMENT DAY.

Need help protecting John Connor and Katherine Brewster? Select the Credits option from the main menu, then press the button combinations listed below.

CODE	EFFECT
X + Y + L	ENABLE ALL UPGRADES
X + Z + R	TURN ON INVINCIBILITY MODE
X + Z + Y	UNLOCK ALL LEVELS



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MADDEN NFL 2005 — GCN

▼ CARD COLLECTOR — PASSWORDS

GAIN AN EDGE ON THE GRIDIRON WITH FREE MADDEN CARDS.

Select My Madden from the main menu, then go to Madden Cards and choose Madden Codes. (Do you remember whose game you're playing yet?) Key in the following case-sensitive passwords to add the corresponding cards to your collection. When you play a card, the effect lasts for the entire game unless otherwise noted.

PASSWORD	MADDEN CARD
072E9B	1ST AND 5 (FOR ONE HALF, REDUCES YOUR FIRST-DOWN REQUIREMENT TO FIVE YARDS)
V65J8P	1ST AND 15 (FOR ONE HALF, REQUIRES YOUR OPPONENT TO GAIN 15 YARDS FOR A FIRST DOWN)
Z28X8K	3RD DOWN (FOR ONE HALF, GIVES YOUR OPPONENT ONLY THREE DOWNS TO GET A FIRST DOWN)
P66C4L	5TH DOWN (FOR ONE HALF, GIVES YOU FIVE DOWNS TO GET A FIRST DOWN)
J33I8F	BINGO! (INCREASES YOUR DEFENSIVE INTERCEPTIONS BY 75%)
B61A8M	DaBOMB (FOR ONE HALF, GIVES YOU UNLIMITED PASS RANGE)
I76X3T	DaBOOT (FOR ONE HALF, GIVES YOU UNLIMITED FIELD-GOAL RANGE)
M89S8G	EXTRA CREDIT (AWARDS FOUR POINTS FOR EVERY INTERCEPTION AND THREE POINTS FOR EVERY SACK)
R14B8Z	FUMBLITIS (INCREASES YOUR OPPONENT'S FUMBLES BY 75%)
L96J7P	HUMAN PLOW (INCREASES YOUR BROKEN TACKLES BY 75%)
D57R5S	LAME DUCK (FOR ONE HALF, CAUSES YOUR OPPONENTS TO THROW NOTHING BUT LOB PASSES)
X78P9Z	MISTAKE FREE (FOR ONE HALF, PREVENTS YOU FROM FUMBLING OR THROWING AN INTERCEPTION)
Y59R8R	MR. MOBILITY (FOR ONE HALF, PREVENTS YOUR QB FROM BEING SACKED)
D59K3Y	SUPER DIVE (INCREASES YOUR DIVING DISTANCE BY 75%)
V34L6D	TIGHT FIT (FOR ONE HALF, NARROWS THE UPRIGHTS WHEN YOUR OPPONENT ATTEMPTS A FIELD GOAL)
L48G1E	UNFORCED ERRORS (FOR ONE HALF, CAUSES YOUR OPPONENT TO FUMBLE EVERY TIME HE TRIES TO JUKE)

As if it weren't hard enough to bring down Michael Vick, the Mr. Mobility card makes it impossible behind the line of scrimmage.

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org for updated rating information.

BRADYGAMES Strategy Guide AVAILABLE

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

PlayStation.2

CLOVER STUDIO

CAPCOM

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Meet the people behind the game.
Then meet the game.

METROID® PRIME 2 ECHOES

np goes retro

Despite having a brand-new DS waiting for us, despite enduring a seven-hour plane ride where the pilot felt the need to drop 10,000 feet in 45 seconds, despite eating possibly the worst Chinese take-out in all of Texas ... we still don't regret a minute of our trip to Retro Studios. The manic geniuses behind Metroid Prime and Metroid Prime 2 Echoes don't often allow people into their Hobbit hole, so the chance to see the place *and* get an exclusive interview was more than worth the trouble. Take a peek at the magic that is the Metroid series, then dive right into our exclusive walk-through. It's almost too good to believe.

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Blood Violence

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meeting the crew

Retro Studios is located in an unassuming office complex in Austin, Texas. Despite being surrounded by a great live music scene and the best BBQ in the country, the folks who work there rarely get out on the town—at least not while a new Metroid game is in development.

Behold the Retro gang in all its glory. Our mind is boggled by the fact that games as good as Metroid Prime and Metroid Prime 2 Echoes can be developed by such a small team—plenty of lesser games have teams twice this size.

As soon as we arrived, we were greeted by Michael Kelbaugh, the president of Retro Studios. He took us on a quick tour of the grounds while we waited for members of the development team to assemble in a conference room. The outside of the studio looks like a normal business complex, but the inside is another story. Everyone seems to have an office—no cubicles here—and you don't see sketch art lining the walls of your typical workplace. Another little goodie that separates Retro from "normal" is the fact that they have an entire motion-capture studio at the back of the facility, although it hasn't been used for some time. (It was originally built so Retro could use motion capture for a football game they were working on, but that project was abandoned when they received the Metroid project.) When we asked Michael how you motion-capture the Morph Ball, he just laughed and kicked a basketball across the floor. Since motion capture isn't feasible for a game in which you can roll into a ball or use the Screw Attack to fly through the air, they now use the room as a music rehearsal space. A number of the Retro team members are talented musicians, and blowing off steam with a late-night jam session appears to be one of the team's most popular pastimes. As we continued wandering, we met one of Retro's lead artists—a man who literally has his entire office covered in sketches. On the door, on the walls … everywhere. From Samus to bosses to Ing to the Morph Ball, everything that you see in the game starts with a rough sketch, and it's fascinating to look at those sketches and then see how they've been implemented into the game. (If you want to get a look at some of the concept art for Metroid Prime 2 Echoes, play the game. There are multiple sketch-art galleries that can be unlocked by performing certain tasks in the single-player experience.) We also met their main sound techie, a fellow who sits in a darkened office surrounded by egg-crate-style foam. He talked to us for a bit about the software he uses while fiddling with the largest keyboard that we've ever seen. (That's the musical instrument, mind you, not the computer tool.)

"What's more scary than losing yourself? That's what we were pushing with the Ing. They don't just come at you with guns—they take you over and you are no more."
Karl Deckard

dark suit

You won't need to worry about hostile takeovers with the Dark Suit. Combined with the Unknown Technology, it resists all attempts at Ing possession.

light suit

In addition to being the pimpiest outfit in all of gaming, the Light Suit completely protects you from the harmful effects of Aether's Dark World. It also allows you to ride beams of light.

dark tallon metroid

Any time a creature is possessed by the Ing, it turns into a dark version of its former self. Dark Tallon Metroids are even more terrifying than their Light World cousins—if such a thing is possible.

"It gets creepy in the Dark World . . . you start looking around and see the [Ing] puddle darting at the edge of the light and you start getting all paranoid. It's a very visceral thing."

Mike Wikan

quadraxis

The Ing's monstrous power comes not only from their true physical forms, but their ability to possess other creatures. When they do so to the hulking robot known as Quadraxis . . . look out below.

the designers speak

After the tour ended, we assembled in a conference room where three of Retro's best and brightest senior designers were waiting: Mike Wikan (who specializes in AI issues, scripting and game implementation), Jason Behr (who works with the incredibly talented Level Design team) and Karl Deckard (who knows so much about game design that it makes our heads spin). We had a million questions for them, but since their time was short we tried to focus on the most important parts of the game and the Metroid experience. One of the most interesting parts of the conversation came when we asked about level design. Since Metroid games have you revisit rooms over and over again, we wondered how the team even knows where to start.

"We have a basic plan," said Mike as the other designers nodded. "Jason handles all the initial layout and planning and stuff, then once we get the rooms mocked up and start playing through, we get a better idea—based on his initial planning and how the enemies are coming along—how enemies will function in that environment. And then we'll go in and make multiple layered pass after pass after pass in a room. It's probably 40 percent preplanning and 60 percent adjustment. You adjust to how the enemies come along and how things work in an environment."

Speaking of enemies, Metroid Prime 2 Echoes contains some of the biggest and meanest in recent memory—including the massive Quadraxis and a mysterious figure known as Dark Samus. We asked the team how they go about creating the bosses, and how much changes as they get deeper into the development process. Karl was the first to speak on the issue.

"Every idea that we do has an initial write-up that's usually a multipage document with flow charts and proposed AI encounter flows and how he attacks, how he deals with you, how large he is and how big the environment is. We'll mock up blue rooms and do a test to see how big he really is and if he can really do those things, and with bosses it's particularly difficult because bosses are such a huge endeavor. So once you do an initial implementation, a boss will probably change 50 percent or so."

That's all well and good, but we wanted to know about Dark Samus! Who is she, where does she come from, what's her deal? When we asked if Dark Samus is the same creature that you see at the end of Metroid Prime, Mike gave a cryptic grin and said he could neither confirm nor deny. Origins aside, however, we did eventually get them to open up about the mysterious figure.

"It's nice to have a boss with clear motivations," said Mike. "It's different than a lot of typical boss encounters when you have a big monster boss where you beat it and move on. Dark Samus has her own agenda."

"It's interesting," chimed in Jason. "I think it adds another layer to the story and the experience for the player. You're trying to be the person that's saving the world, and at the same time, there's a much more personal mystery that players want to solve. How does Dark Samus relate to the player? How close are they? I think it's a very strange thing to look in the mirror and see [Dark Samus] looking back."

Karl went a step further. "My favorite character is Dark Samus, because it's not this typical boss battle where you have this huge hulking machine of some sort that's three stories high—this is like a real person and you have to use tactics differently. And she can do some things you don't expect, and that's what I like about it."

"I have to agree," said Jason. "Dark Samus is definitely a fresh experience.

These are three of the brains behind Metroid Prime 2 Echoes, although it takes a team of talented players to bring the project to fruition.

[She's] my favorite boss to fight, and a change of pace from large 10-story bosses. [When] you see something with similar abilities bouncing around, it's fun."

"I like 10-story bosses too," muttered Mike—which cracked up the room.

The topic of fun was interesting to us, because at its heart that's what makes or breaks any game. We asked the gentlemen what makes a game fun, and they had ready answers.

"One aspect is that you just forget about the controls and have a fluid, immersive experience," said Karl. "One thing I really look for in a game is that in half an hour you can forget about *how* to do things and just *do* things. It's one of the difficult things about game design, because there's no recipe for fun. If everyone knew what made a game fun, all games would be fun. And they're not."

Mike agreed. "It's easy to slip into Samus's skin and forget that you're sitting in your living room watching TV and holding the controller in your hands. You're there. And because we spent so much time making it easy to use and control, the player doesn't have to worry about those things. They can just enjoy the moment and worry about how to solve that puzzle or get that Energy Tank."

The Retro team obviously has a love for their work, and we wondered if some of that enthusiasm came from a respect for the other Metroid games. Jason quickly confirmed the theory when we asked him why they included the Screw Attack in Echoes.

"We have a big passion for the old games in the series, and any time we can try to capture some of the more fun gameplay from the old series we do. And there was a great window of opportunity there to bring back an old ability and challenge ourselves to see how well it would work in a 3-D environment. And we've done a great job."

"One of the things I like about the [Metroid] license and what we're doing with it is that it expands the awareness of sci-fi," said Karl. "Because there are all these fly-the-spaceship-type games on PC, and a certain niche audience that plays those games. What we try to do is make a science-fiction game that appeals to everyone."

"I'm excited about what we were able to do with the artists," said Jason. "Our artists are absolutely incredible, and we're able to create environments that are both realistic and immersive. Players can go in and feel like they're in a living, breathing world, but at the same time they provide a wonderful platforming experience."

With a team full of PhD-level designers and artists, it's no wonder that Retro has lived up to the expectations for a Metroid Prime sequel. If you want to read our full (lengthy) interview, head to the Metroid game page at www.nintendo.com and click on Developer Info. Once you're done, turn the page and get ready to visit Aether for the first time.

pirate commando

Pirate Commandos have been trained for one purpose: hunting the hunter. They are equipped with the latest in technology, including a variable pulse cannon, e-grenade launcher and energy scythe.

"You can't do something another game did just because it was fun. You have to take that kernel of information and make it yours."
Karl Deckard

"With console FPS games, they tend to follow a certain paradigm. You have a dual analog stick and you press this button to switch weapons and blah, blah, blah. Metroid has always been different from other games. There's always something special about it, and that's what makes it a classic."
Mike Wikan

"I think beyond anyone's expectation for the series or FPS games, multiplayer in Metroid is just inherently fun. I remember the first game we mocked it up just for kicks . . . no weapons or anything, just running around and interacting with each other. You can't ignore something that fun—it has to go in the game."
Jason Behr

get going, hunter

Now that you have a taste of the blood, sweat and tears that went into making Echoes, it's time to explore the game on your own. Our walk-through will take you through the first temple and to the game's first major boss—an enormous worm called Amorbis.

temple grounds

When you exit your ship, switch to the Scan Visor by pressing Left on the Control Pad, then scan away by holding down the L Button until the bar at the bottom of the screen is full. You can scan almost anything in the game, and many of the items will be added to your logbook. If you fill the entire logbook, you'll earn a special bonus at the end of the game. Some things, such as bosses, are one-time-only scans, so if you miss them you're out of luck. Be vigilant.

Map Key

- S Save Station
- A Ammo Station
- M Map Station
- A Elevator
- A Portal
- Missile Expansion
- Energy Tank
- Beam Expansion
- Missile Launcher
- Morph Ball Bomb
- Space Jump Boots
- Dark Beam
- Light Beam
- Dark Suit
- Dark Temple Key

1 Temple Grounds / Hive Access Tunnel

the exploration begins

Blast the green sacs in the middle of the webbing to clear a path, then go through the blue door, hang a right and drop off the ledge.

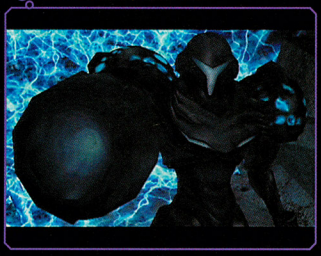
2 Temple Grounds / Command Chamber

rolling with the homies

Scan the left-hand panel to expose the gate locks, then blast them open. Scan a panel on the right-hand side of Hive Tunnel to enter Command Chamber. To activate the nonworking panel, roll into Morph Ball form by pressing X, then follow the Worker Splinters into a small hole at the back of the room. Once there, Bomb-Jump into the Bomb Slot and activate it.

3 Temple Grounds / Hive Chamber B

hello there, dark one



Take out the Dark Troopers that arise when you activate the Bomb Slot (a Charge Beam shot or a missile will work nicely), then scan the now-functioning panel and continue on. In Hive Chamber B, you'll meet a mysterious figure.

4 Temple Grounds / Hive Chamber C

malfunctions galore

After you visit the Dark World via a cut scene, you'll lose most of your weapons and tools. Blast the green sacs at the rear of the room to reveal a tunnel, then roll down it and into the next room. Eliminate the Dark Troopers with the Charge Beam, then use the same weapon to blast the crates at the side of the room. Go through the door there and use the Save Station.

5 Temple Grounds / Industrial Site

make your own path

Activate and use the elevator to reach the Industrial Site. Scan a panel to move the large crate, then walk up along the edge of the room and scan the panel to drop the bridge.

6 Temple Grounds / Temple Assembly Site

hitting the cable

Scan the panel near the violet door at the far end of the room to drop the large crate. When it gets stuck, blast the cable with your Power Beam.

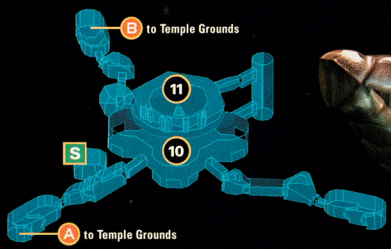
Temple Grounds / GFMC Compound

MISSILE LAUNCHER

In Trooper Security Station, roll into an opening near the security gate and scan a panel, then roll under the gate. After you hit GFMC Compound and watch the cut scene, scan the bodies to earn logbook entries, then blast the large yellow crate with your Charge Beam to earn the Missile Launcher. A horde of Dark Splinters will appear soon afterward—use missiles and the Charge Beam to avoid the same unfortunate fate as the *G.F.S. Tyr*'s fearless crew.

great temple

The Great Temple is a small area that consists of only a few rooms, but you'll be visiting it many times during your adventure. Head for the top of the temple, but be sure to use the nearby Save Station in Transport Access A first—there's a nasty boss battle coming up.



7 cannonball fun

Temple Grounds / GFMC Compound

Enter the *Tyr* and use the Map Station, then jump through the hole in the ship's side and follow the ledge until you see a panel. Scan it to activate the Kinetic Orb Cannon, then roll into the device. Once it fires you across the room, open the red door with a missile and continue.

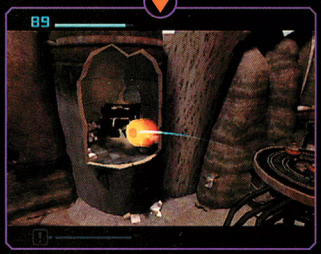
8 more cannons

Temple Grounds / Sacred Bridge

Roll through the small opening on the left-hand side, then look up to find a panel. Scan it to turn on a second Kinetic Orb Cannon, then use the device to reach the far side of Sacred Bridge.

9 bustin' out

Temple Grounds / Sacred Path



Find the cracked wall on the left-hand side of Sacred Path and blast it with a missile to weaken it further. Scan the panel at the bottom of the room (it's hidden in a narrow crevice), then use the cannon to fire yourself through the cracked wall. Roll down the set of rails beyond and go through the door at the other end.

10 smash the splinter

Great Temple / Temple Sanctuary

When you enter Temple Sanctuary, you'll battle a horde of Splinters. After you best them, you'll have to face an Alpha Splinter. Dash to sidestep its attacks (you can dash by locking on to the creature, pressing Left or Right and tapping B), and return fire with the Charge Beam. When it turns into a Dark Alpha Splinter, unload all your missiles, then return to the Charge Beam. Scan both kinds of Alpha Splinter—it's your only chance to do so.

11 u-mos spills the beans

Great Temple / Main Energy Controller

After you defeat the Dark Alpha Splinter, you'll earn the Unknown Technology. It doesn't seem very impressive, but the new tool will allow you to transfer energy between the Dark and Light Worlds—a skill that will come in quite handy. Go through the blue door and ride the elevator to Main Energy Controller, where you'll meet a Luminoth named U-Mos. He'll tell you a tale of woe about his planet and people, then beg your assistance. Like any good bounty hunter, you'll accept the offer.

agon wastes

Scan the violet door in Temple Sanctuary, then ride the elevator back to Temple Grounds. Grab the Energy Tank behind the red door in Temple Assembly Site and backtrack to Industrial Site. Once there, scan a violet door and walk down a glass-lined hallway until you find an elevator. Grab the Missile Expansion behind the right-hand webbing and scan the Luminoth Lore, then take the elevator. (To find the lore, walk to the very edge of the cliff and turn around.)

12 watch for falling pillars

Agon Wastes / Mining Plaza

Upon entering Mining Plaza, you'll encounter a pair of Sandiggers. Take them out by shooting the exposed pink parts, then follow the path up and around the wall. When you encounter pillars, shoot their bases with missiles to create bridges. At the end of the journey, you'll find a door that leads deeper into Agon Wastes.

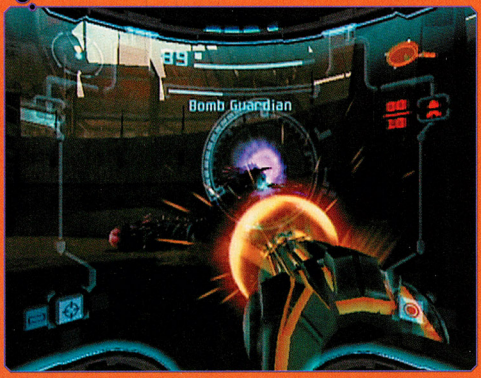
13 pirates thar be

Agon Wastes / Mining Station A

Take out the three Pirate Troopers in Mining Station A by hitting them with a Charge Beam blast followed by a missile. After the coast is clear, leap to the top of the room and go through the red door at the far end.

BOMB GUARDIAN

Agon Wastes / Agon Temple



When you enter the middle of Agon Temple, gates will drop and trap you inside. When the Alpha Sandigger appears, quickly scan it before it turns into the Bomb Guardian, then go to work. Get close to the beast and hit it in the pink part of the tail with missiles. When it rears its head, hurry to the front and blast it in the face with a Charge Beam. After a few hits, it will go down and give you Morph Ball Bombs.

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dark agon wastes

The Dark Agon Wastes are a twisted mockery of the Light World, and a very dangerous place to be. The very air of the Dark World is poison, meaning that you'll need to move quickly and keep to whatever protective light sources you can find.

14 another sad story

Agon Wastes / Agon Energy Controller

Go through the blue door at the end of Agon Temple, then use a Bomb Jump to access the Bomb Slot. When you activate it, the room will spin and point you toward Agon Energy Controller. Scan the device near the deceased Luminoth to find out about the Dark Temple Keys and gain the ability to translate amber holograms. Locate the lore hidden between two walls (near the entrance) on the way out.

15 mappy land

Agon Wastes / Agon Map Station

Head back through Mining Station A, stopping only to open the amber door at the top of the room and get a Missile Expansion. Backtrack to Mining Station Access and bomb the block above the Kinetic Orb Cannon to get another Energy Tank. When you reach Mining Plaza, scan the lore in the middle of the room then drop to the floor, lower the amber door and bomb a block to reach the Map Station.

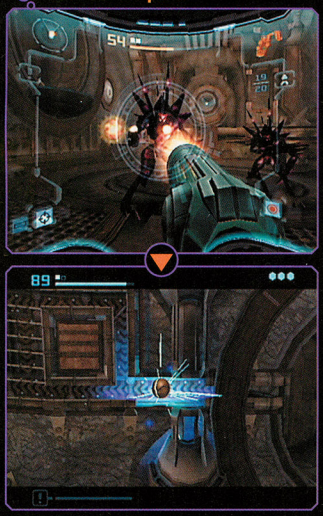
16 up and over

Agon Wastes / Portal Access A

Go through the door halfway up Mining Station A to reach Portal Access A. Use the Kinetic Orb Cannons to get over the wall, then snag the Missile Expansion that is hidden behind the Luminoth body.

17 activate the portal

Agon Wastes / Portal Terminal



Eliminate two Pirate Troopers and two Dark Pirate Troopers to activate the Bomb Slot at the far end of the room. Activate the slot to start a lift system, and use it to reach a breakable block. Bomb the block to create a bridge to the other side of the room, then jump over and repeat the process two more times. (Be sure to scan the Pillbugs in the left-hand wall—it's your only chance to get them.) When light floods into the room, scan the lower-left circle of the portal to activate it, then step through.

18 surviving the dark world

Dark Agon Wastes / Portal Site

There are two kinds of force field generators in the Dark World—Light Beacons and Light Crystals—and both will generate fields that protect you from the poison air. Light Crystals are always active (unless covered by some sort of ooze), but you must activate the beacons by shooting them with the Power Beam. You'll slowly gain health while standing inside a field, but be careful when you stand in a beacon's field; they turn off after a few seconds, meaning that you must recharge them with another Power Beam shot. Once you're comfy with the new, strange world, head for the Bomb Slot at the far side of the room and activate it to open a blue door.

19 the warrior awaits

Dark Agon Wastes / Duelling Range

Blast the Inglets in Crossroads and Save Station Two (a single missile will take them out) before entering Duelling Range. Follow the path of Light Crystals until you reach a large, open area where an Ing Warrior will appear. Hit it with the Charge Beam and missiles, and try to keep the crystal between yourself and it—doing so will create a shield against its beam attacks. The warrior will sometimes charge and attach itself to you, causing damage for a short time, but you can dash to avoid the attack. Once the warrior goes to Ing heaven (or that other place, more likely), use the Lightbringers and beacons to reach the door at the top of the room.

Dark Agon Wastes / Judgment Pit

JUMP GUARDIAN

The Jump Guardian fights like a Warrior Ing, except that it can jump long distances. (It's also invulnerable when charging a jump or in the air.) Hit the critter with the Charge Beam while it's on the ground, and missiles when it's up on the cliff. When it lands on the ground, leap over the quake that it creates, and continue pressing the attack. After you fell the beast, take the Space Jump Boots, head for the midlevel blue door and follow it to Portal Site.

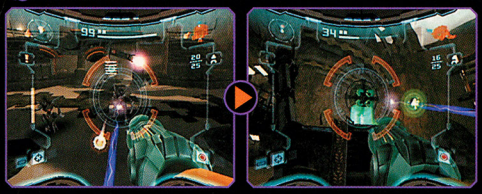
Agon Wastes / Mining Station A

20 getting a head in the world

Once you're back in the Light World, return to Mining Station A and jump onto the statue of a head. Leap into the small passageway to the left of the head, and follow it around to a panel. Scan the panel and the lore, then go back to the statue and hop through the new door.

Agon Wastes / Central Mining Station

21 ride the waves



Defeat three waves of Pirate Troopers (including a pair that man Vigilance Class Turrets) to lower the barrier over the door in Central Mining Station. Enter Command Center Access and bomb the cracked floor, then drop, bomb crates and roll through the tunnel.

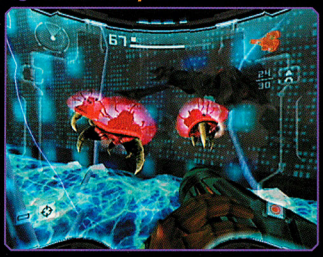
Agon Wastes / Command Center

22 infiltrating the pirates

Roll to the Command Center and navigate through the electric barriers. Head to the right to get a Missile Expansion, then go left to find the maze's exit. Once you're out in the open again, defeat the Pirate Troopers and start scanning all the computers for logbook entries and important info. (Don't miss the two holographic planets.) Ride the elevator and go through the door at the top of the room, then follow the path around and into the control room. Scan the computers to lower the blast door, then backtrack and go through the blue door behind the recently lowered blast door.

Agon Wastes / Biostorage Station

23 metroid mayhem



There is a pair of turrets on the other side of the blast door. Take them out with missiles, then roll through the lasers and enter Biostorage Station. Several storage tanks there contain live Tallon Metroids. Even though a couple of the tanks have ominous cracks, the flying critters are contained for now. Pass through the room and use the Bomb Slot in Security Station A to rotate the lock and enter the next area.

Agon Wastes / Bioenergy Production

24 platforming

Take out the two Pirate Aerotroopers in Bioenergy Production, then scan the panel with a claw-shaped design to activate a series of platforms in the middle of the room; go to the other side to move them up and down. While standing at the controls and looking out at the platforms, lower one platform on the left, two in the middle and three on the right, then use them to reach an Energy Tank. Reverse the procedure to access a door on the other side of the room.

Agon Wastes / Sand Processing

25 breaking the glass

When you enter a side-scrolling section, use bombs to break the blocks and jump to the other side of the room—make sure that you avoid touching the lasers, as they can drain your energy in a heartbeat. Enter Save Station C and scan the Space Pirate Log, then go to Sand Processing and fire a missile at the weakened section of wall on the left-hand side.

Agon Wastes / Main Reactor

DARK SAMUS

In the first stage, Dark Samus attacks with missiles and a shrapnel beam. She also has a shield, but can raise it for only a short period of time. If you stand far away and fire missiles as fast as you can, many will breach the shield. Once you whittle away half of Dark Samus's life, the boss will begin firing stronger missiles and hurling herself at you. When the creature rises into the air and begins to glow, seek cover. Though the explosion is fierce, the boss is vulnerable for a moment afterward. Charge the Power Beam and run to her side, then wait for her to stop glowing. The moment she does, hit her with the beam. Upon defeating Dark Samus, take an elevator to the top floor, enter the blue door and pick up the much sought-after Dark Beam.

Agon Wastes / Command Center

26 the portal posse

In addition to being a great weapon, the Dark Beam can open dark doors, energize certain crystals and open portals. Return to Command Center and take down the Pirate Grenadiers, then use the Dark Beam to activate the portal to the Dark World.

Dark Agon Wastes / Portal Site B

27 nullified no more

Shoot the Nullified Crystal with the Power Beam to activate it, then shoot the Luminoth carving with a missile to shatter it and reveal a Light Lift Crystal. Hit the crystal with the Dark Beam to raise the platform. Jump on top of the platform and leap to the Dark Temple Key on an adjacent ledge, then head through the nearby black door and into Oasis Access.

Dark Agon Wastes / Hall of Stairs

28 up goes the block

Pass through Dark Oasis and into Hall of Stairs. Go to the other side of the block in the middle of the room and look for the Light Lift Crystal. Shoot the crystal to raise the block, then jump onto the block and to the ledge on the other side of the room.

Dark Agon Wastes / Bitter Well

29 bomb-jump boogie

Go through Save Station Three and into Bitter Well. Use the Bomb Jump to cross the phazon pool (press Left just before the bomb explodes to clear the gap), then roll to the other side.

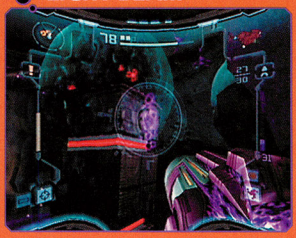
Dark Agon Wastes / Phazon Site

30 three on a match

The far door in Phazon Site will remain locked until you scan three panels. The first is on the right-hand side of the room, near a pile of bodies. The second is on the left-hand side of the room, behind a pile of crates (hit them with the Charge Beam to access the panel). The third is on a high ledge—leap between the moving platforms to access it.

Dark Agon Wastes / Feeding Pit

LIGHT BEAM



Move fast through Watering Hole so the Lumites don't knock you into the poison mist. Enter Feeding Pit and shoot the two Light Lift Crystals, then jump to the high dark door and go through it to collect the Light Beam.

Dark Agon Wastes / Portal Site B

31 pure energy

Fire the Light Beam at the white door in Feeding Pit and go to Portal Site B. While you're wandering, use the Light Beam on Light Crystals and Light Beacons. You'll create energized versions of each—in addition to being logbook entries, they'll destroy dark enemies on contact.

32 another key for the collection

Dark Agon Wastes / Battleground

Go through the top black door (near where you got the first key) and head for Battleground—where several Warrior Ing have laid a trap. Hit them with a charged Light Beam to dispatch the baddies with ease, then grab the Dark Temple Key that appears at the fight's end.

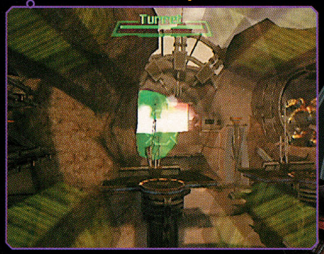
33 manhandle the metroids

Agon Wastes / Bioenergy Production

Go back to Dark Oasis and use the Light Beam to activate the portal and return to the Light World. As you pass through Bioenergy Production, Tallon Metroids will attack. Freeze them with a shot from the charged Dark Beam, then blow them to bits with a missile.

34 collect a beam expansion

Agon Wastes / Central Mining Station



Get the Missile Expansion that's behind the dark door in Biostorage Station, then head for Command Center. Take the upper light door into Central Mining Station and use the left-hand turret to destroy three gray generators. Leap onto the Pirate Skiff (don't forget to scan it), and from there to the hole on the right-hand ledge. Walk around to the force field and roll behind it for a Beam Ammo Expansion—which ups the amount of Dark and Light Ammo you can carry.

35 the final key

Dark Agon Wastes / Trial Tunnel

Enter the Dark World via Portal Terminal. Go through the upper red door in Judgment Pit and head to Dark Agon Temple. Move left until you find a door on the left-hand side, then enter it to find the final Dark Temple Key. Go back to the glowing red light at the front of the temple and get ready for a fight.

AMORBIS

Dark Agon Wastes / Dark Agon Temple

Shoot Amorbis with missiles when it pops out of the sand (use the radar to locate it). After a few hits, the creature will attach to the sphere in the middle of the room. Hit it in the face with a charged Light Beam to break off its mandibles. When you do, it will try to suck you up—roll into Morph Ball form and let it do so, then drop bombs inside it. Repeat the process through two more stages. To avoid the beams of light it fires, double-jump or use the Morph Ball.

36 transfer the energy

Dark Agon Wastes / Dark Agon Energy Controller

After Amorbis is no more, get the Dark Suit and go through the door at the far end of the temple. Walk to the controller to take its energy, then go back to Agon Energy Controller (in the Light World) and restore power there.

only the beginning

After you restore the energy, return to Main Energy Controller in Temple Grounds and speak to U-Mos to get your next assignment. You'll be spending some time in a damp and lonely place, so prep well! Not to worry—we'll have tons of additional strategy and tips for all aspiring bounty hunters in next month's NP.

EXPECT THE INCREDIBLE!

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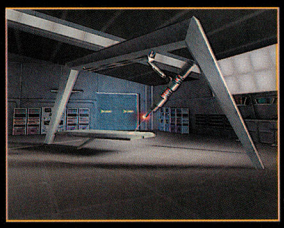
GoldenEye Rogue Agent™

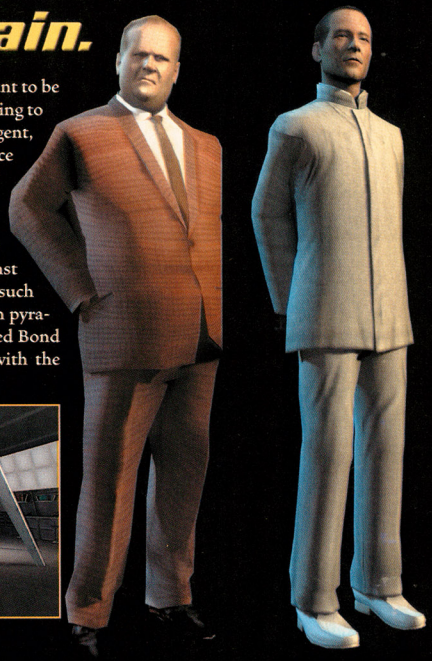
If you've ever considered the world of the James Bond baddie—if you've thought, just for a moment, how you would best Bond given the chance—EA has an adventure for you. GoldenEye: Rogue Agent is a ticket to Bond's underworld, giving you free reign to do your worst: plow through henchmen, accumulate power and rise through the ranks of supervillainy. The name GoldenEye means a lot to Nintendo fans. The original N64 title is a classic among first-person shooters, and is still considered by many to be one of the best multiplayer console titles around. Although Rogue Agent is not a sequel, it has some similarities: its ingenious level design and pulse-pounding action will have you holding your Controller tight, just like its predecessor.

GoldenEye Rogue Agent Interactive Game (all source code, all other software components and certain audiovisual components only) ©2004 Electronic Arts Inc. GoldenEye Rogue Agent Interactive Game (certain audiovisual components) ©2004 Danjaq LLC and United Artists Corporation.

Villain. Super Villain.

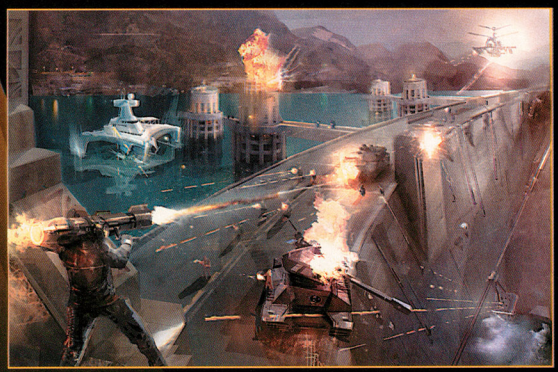
Supervillains have superegos. Auric Goldfinger and Dr. No both want to be the biggest and baddest of the evil-guy elite, and they'll stop at nothing to beat each other to the punch. As a former MI6 operative turned free agent, you have joined Goldfinger in the pursuit of underworld dominance and revenge on Dr. No for an injustice that left you with a damaged eye. Your moniker, GoldenEye, comes from the gilded sphere that has replaced your right eye. The prosthetic gives you special powers, such as the abilities to see through solid barriers and jam electronic equipment. Your mission to aid Goldfinger in his wicked war against the bad doctor will take you to exotic locales seen in the Bond films, such as the Golden Gate Bridge (from *A View to a Kill*) and the Egyptian pyramids (from *The Spy Who Loved Me*). You'll also meet up with famed Bond characters Pussy Galore, Xenia Onatopp, Oddjob and the man with the golden gun himself, Scaramanga. The world of evil awaits.





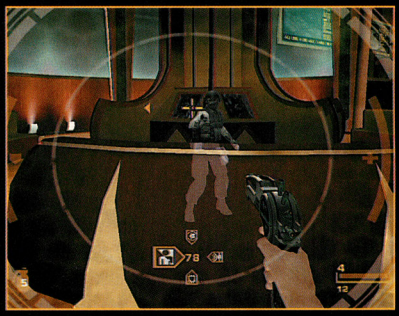
GoldenEye, Silver Screen

One of the most prolific franchises in movie history, the James Bond series has cultivated a style of its own. To re-create the look and feel of the Bond film universe, Rogue Agent's development team worked with the masters. Production designer Sir Ken Adam (a contributor to several Bond films) provided input on the environments, and character designer Rene Morel and costumer Kym Barret added their film experience to the mix. To top it all off, legendary actors Christopher Lee and Judi Dench reprised their roles as Scaramanga and M, respectively.



An Eye for Action

Your GoldenEye receives four upgrades that you can employ to gain the upper hand on your adversaries. Spy them from behind cover, make their weapons useless through electronic jamming, deflect their shots then pick up the baddies and toss them. You'll leave a trail of bodies on your way to Dr. No.



Two-Fisted Fury

As a resourceful agent, you have no need for a weapon inventory. Instead, you simply pick up and use whatever the enemies have left behind. You can carry a weapon in each hand and trigger them individually, grab human shields with a free hand or hold large long-range weapons with both hands.

Frenzied Foes

Your adversaries don't like being shot at. They'll do everything within their power to stop you in your tracks by learning your behavior and reacting to your every move. Enemies hide behind cover—sometimes exposing their hands only to fire back at you—and trigger a variety of diabolical traps.

Group Dynamics

The game's second disc is packed with multiplayer arenas in which you can face off against or fight alongside your pals. The 20-plus areas, complete with tunnels, alcoves and traps, are just the right size for four players; they give you room to roam, but keep the action tight.

Mission One: Fort Knox

In a training mission that mirrors the climactic scene from *Goldfinger*, you'll join James Bond in an attempt to keep Auric Goldfinger's forces from harming the gold reserve. Bond's part is small, and he leaves you to fend for yourself shortly after the mission starts. Duck behind the rubble and fire at Goldfinger's guard when you have a clear shot. Pick up a weapon for each hand from the ones that the enemies leave behind, and follow the path to the next area. There you can catch a guard unaware and use him as a human shield.

Make good use of rubble. Hide behind the scenery to guard yourself from enemy fire and to let your health regenerate.

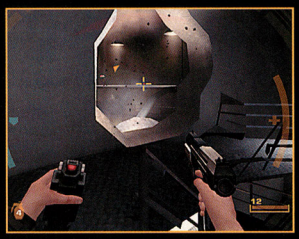
After you descend two flights of stairs then round a corner, you'll find an AR4 rifle. Use it to defeat foes from a distance.

Dispatch the control-room enemies quickly, then move on to the window that overlooks the gold-loading room. Activate the sled to clear the first set of tracks, pick up the AR4 that is leaning against the ladder railing, then drop into the large room. From a protected position near the sled controls, use your AR4 to target the enemies on the catwalk and in the middle of the ground floor. Cross the tracks and defeat more foes. Then, as you cross the second set of tracks, fire on the guard who rushes to the sled controls.

From the control room, you'll see enemies crossing the gold-loading room's tracks. Send the sled to squash them.

Grab an AR4 from the control room, then drop into the gold-loading room and fire at enemies on the catwalks.

The closer you get to the vault, the more enemies you'll encounter. Before you leave the gold-loading room, toss grenades through the wide-open hole into the next room to thin out the enemy forces. Walk down the stairs into the room and quickly cut over to the next hallway. When you reach the floor of the main area, advance carefully. Hide behind a palette and defeat all of the enemies in sight, then move on to the next palette and repeat the process. You're closing in on the vault.

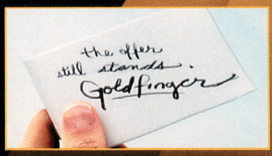


At the far end of the gold-loading room, toss grenades through the hole to clear the next area.

Make your way to the vault cautiously, clearing away the enemies that hide behind the palettes of gold.

Goldfinger Wants You

The mission ends with failure and the revelation that it wasn't real—it was a holographic simulation set up to prove that your destructive methods are unsuitable for MI6. Never fear—there are organizations that reward such behavior. Seconds after M gives you the boot, you'll remember that Goldfinger has extended an open invitation for you to join his fold, and he has just the job for you. The underworld is murky. You don't always know who your friends are. But as long as you have two hands, the GoldenEye and the willingness to do anything to get the job done, you'll do just fine.



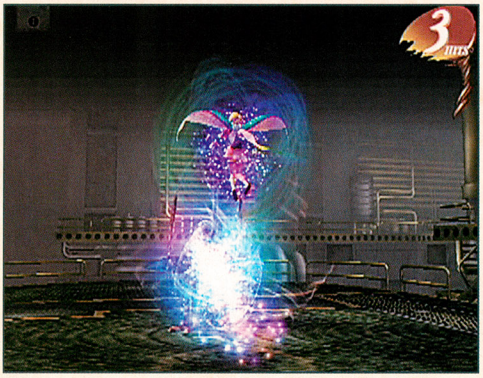
We've been tempting you with gorgeous screenshots and tantalizing tidbits for months—now learn what makes Namco's latest GCN masterpiece tick.

BATEN KAITOS™

ETERNAL WINGS AND THE LOST OCEAN

Reinventing a Genre

What do you get when you combine turn-based battle with a generous helping of fast-paced action, a pinch of card-game strategy and Namco's signature innovation? One of the most amazing and intricate RPG battle systems ever created. We've dedicated the next four pages to exploring the elaborate system's basics, and we're barely scratching the surface. This game is deep—*very* deep. The battle system appears simple at first, but once you understand the delicate balance between elements, Spirit Numbers and combos, you'll be astounded by the sheer number of possibilities.



TEEN T
Blood
Fantasy Violence
Mild Language
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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Magnus Basics

Magnus is created when an object's Magna Essence is sealed in a weapon, armor, food, spell or item card. The four main types of Magnus are Battle, Camp, Equipment and Quest, but you will discover other types throughout the game. The four primary Magnus types are explained in greater detail at the bottom of this page.

MAGNUS ELEMENTS

Most Magnus possess an elemental property such as Wind or Fire. A Magnus's color reflects its element. For example, Light Magnus are white and Fire Magnus are red. The diagram below represents the relationships between the elements. Each element has an opposite: Dark and Light, Fire and Water, and Wind and Chronos.

NEUTRAL

The seventh element, Neutral, is actually not an element at all. Rather, it is the absence of any elemental property. Neutral Magnus are neither weak nor strong against any other element; you can combine them with other elements in battle without risking any negative effects.

Beware of Opposite Elements

It is crucial to consider elemental opposites in battle. If you play two Magnus that possess opposite elements during the same turn, they will cancel out each other's effects—on either offense or defense.

Avoid playing opposite elements during the same turn—doing so is counterproductive. For example, if you play a Water-based Magnus that has 45 Attack with a Fire-based Magnus that has 40 Attack, the result will be a Water-based Magnus that has 5 Attack. The rule applies to all Magnus, including defensive and restorative Magnus.

SPIRIT NUMBERS

Battle Magnus bear one to four Spirit Numbers in their corners—the numbers, which act like numbers on a regular card deck, span from one to nine. When a Battle Magnus has more than one Spirit Number, use the C Stick to quickly select the one you want to use.

Straights and Of-a-Kind Combos

Forming Magnus straights and of-a-kind combos (two of a kind, etc.) in battle will increase the damage you inflict during offensive turns, and decrease the damage you take during defensive turns. You can play Magnus that bear the same Spirit Number in any combination, such as 7, 6, 7, 6. Straights are a combination of cards that follow an ascending or descending sequence, such as 1, 2, 3, 4—you must play straights in sequential order.

Prize Percentages

When you play Spirit Number straights and of-a-kind combos in battle, you'll earn prize percentages. The table below displays some examples, and the percentage by which the damage you inflict will decrease or by which the damage you suffer will decrease.

OFFENSE	
Two-card straight:	+13%
Three-card straight:	+28%
Four-card straight:	+45%
Five-card straight:	+64%
Six-card straight:	+86%
Seven-card straight:	+111%
Eight-card straight:	+139%
Two-card straight that includes 9:	+19%
Three-card straight that includes 9:	+42%
Four-card straight that includes 9:	+67%
Five-card straight that includes 9:	+96%
Six-card straight that includes 9:	+129%
Seven-card straight that includes 9:	+166%
Eight-card straight that includes 9:	+208%
Final straight Sunset: (This is a straight from 9 to 1)	+255%
Final straight Sunrise: (This is a straight from 1 to 9)	+306%
Two of a kind:	+10%
Three of a kind:	+21%
Four of a kind:	+33%
Five of a kind:	+45%
Six of a kind:	+57%
Seven of a kind:	+69%
Eight of a kind:	+81%
Nine of a kind:	+93%
Two of a kind that includes 9:	+15%
Three of a kind that includes 9:	+31%
Four of a kind that includes 9:	+49%
Five of a kind that includes 9:	+67%
Six of a kind that includes 9:	+85%
Seven of a kind that includes 9:	+103%
Eight of a kind that includes 9:	+121%
Nine of a kind that includes 9:	+139%

DEFENSE	
Two-card straight:	-11%
Three-card straight:	-21%
Four-card straight:	-31%
Five-card straight:	-39%
Six-card straight:	-46%
Seven-card straight:	-52%
Eight-card straight:	-58%
Two-card straight that includes 9:	-15%
Three-card straight that includes 9:	-29%
Four-card straight that includes 9:	-40%
Five-card straight that includes 9:	-48%
Six-card straight that includes 9:	-56%
Seven-card straight that includes 9:	-62%
Eight-card straight that includes 9:	-67%
Final straight Sunset: (This is a straight from 9 to 1)	-71%
Final straight Sunrise: (This is a straight from 1 to 9)	-75%
Two of a kind:	-9%
Three of a kind:	-17%
Four of a kind:	-24%
Five of a kind:	-31%
Six of a kind:	-36%
Seven of a kind:	-40%
Eight of a kind:	-44%
Nine of a kind:	-48%
Two of a kind that includes 9:	-13%
Three of a kind that includes 9:	-23%
Four of a kind that includes 9:	-32%
Five of a kind that includes 9:	-40%
Six of a kind that includes 9:	-45%
Seven of a kind that includes 9:	-50%
Eight of a kind that includes 9:	-54%
Nine of a kind that includes 9:	-58%

Basic Magnus Types

Battle Magnus

You can utilize Battle Magnus over and over, but only during battle. To use a Battle Magnus, you must equip it to a character's deck prior to engaging in a fight.

Camp Magnus

Camp Magnus are consumable Magnus that you can use only outside of battle—after you do, it will disappear. Common Camp Magnus effects are HP recovery, status-ailment cure and resurrection.

Equipment Magnus

Equipment Magnus are character-specific; they affect their wearers' resistance to status effects including Sleep, Paralysis and Poison. Each character can wear only one Equipment Magnus at a time.

Quest Magnus

Magna Essence gathered in blank cards becomes Quest Magnus. People will ask for specific Quest Magnus; they'll reward you if you bring them what they want. You'll also use Quest Magnus to solve many of the game's puzzles.

Finishing Moves

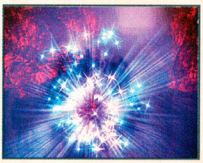
Each main character has a unique fighting style and set of nine fishing moves. A finishing move is a powerful Battle Magnus that bears a small Roman numeral at the bottom. You must play a specific number of cards during a character's offensive turn before you can use one of his or her finishing moves. For example, Kalas's first finishing move requires him to play one card first.

Kalas

The story's headstrong protagonist, Kalas, wields dual blades. His powerful finishing moves span all six elements, but Wind and Chronos are his most prominent.

Xelha

The tale's compassionate heroine, Xelha, excels at magic. Four of her finishing moves are Light-based—her other five cover the remaining five elements.



Gibari

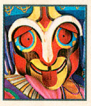
Gibari is a fisherman, and his trade comes in handy in battle—he clobbers his foes with massive paddles. His finishing moves include a well-balanced blend of all six elements.

Lyude

Lyude, a refined imperial ambassador, uses a collection of brass instrument-firearms in battle. Even his finishing moves, which are Light and Dark only, are musical.

Savyna

The solemn, strong-willed huntress, Savyna, delivers lightning-fast fist attacks in battle. Her finishing moves consist entirely of Fire- and Water-based Magnus.

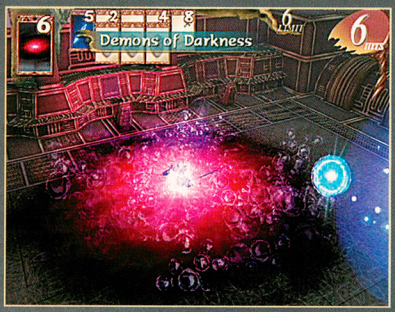


Mizuti

Mizuti, a peculiar but powerful masked sorcerer from another dimension, uses spells. He is the only character in the game who uses Neutral-based finishing moves.

A Spirit Guardian's Role

At the beginning of the game, Kalas will reveal that he has a Spirit Guardian—a spirit with whom he has bonded. The Spirit Guardian is you, the player. It will be your job to instill the party with confidence and wisdom by answering important questions correctly. The manner in which you answer the questions will either strengthen or weaken your relationship with the one to whom you are bound. This relationship is directly related to how frequently Spirit Attacks will become available in battle.

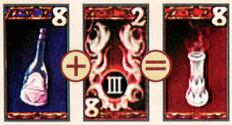


Spirit Attacks are extremely powerful Magnus that will appear randomly during battle. Six exist—one for each element except Neutral. Only one who is bound to a Spirit Guardian can use Spirit Attacks. When a Spirit Attack appears in battle, it will temporarily transform one of the Magnus in your current hand into the Spirit Attack Magnus. You never know when a Spirit Attack will become available, but when you use one, your foes won't know what hit 'em.

Special Combos

You can create new Magnus by performing a Special Combo during battle. (Some Magnus are obtainable only in this way.) To pull off a Special Combo, you must play specific Magnus in an exact order. During your turn, play only the Magnus that are part of the Special Combo; otherwise, you won't produce a new Magnus. Many Special Combos will work with more than one combination of Magnus, but the order of Magnus types never changes. A Magnus's description will often hold clues about what other Magnus may pair well with it. You won't lose the Magnus you used to create the new one, so experiment often. You'll be able to claim your newly created Magnus at the end of the battle. We've provided a few examples of Special Combos below and to the right.

Hot Rice Wine



Nothing warms cold travelers like piping-hot rice wine. Combine Japanese Rice Wine with Fire Burst III to create Hot Rice Wine. The drink has a 60-percent chance of curing Freeze if used during an offensive turn, and a 60-percent chance of resisting Freeze on a defensive turn.

Charcoal

Add a smoky flavor to all your cooked goods with Charcoal. When you combine a wood Magnus, such as Cedar Wood, with Fire Burst I, the result is a Charcoal Magnus. You need Charcoal to create some of the more complex food-related Special Combos, but you can't attack or defend with it.

Beef Jerky

One of the best ways to keep meat from spoiling on a long journey is to make it into jerky. Combine a fresh-meat Magnus, such as Beef, with Fire Burst I to make the Beef Jerky Magnus. The jerky keeps well over time and replenishes for 500 HP when you use it in battle.

Grilled Hamburger

Combine some form of fresh meat, such as Fresh Beef, with Charcoal and a Fire Burst Magnus, such as Fire Burst I, to create Grilled Hamburger. It refills 700 HP and has a 40-percent chance to cure Freeze if used during an offensive turn, and adds +40 Freeze resistance on a defensive turn.

Cooked Rice

Rice is a staple for any battle-worn hero. Start with a Power Helmet as a pot, and add Uncooked Rice, Water Burst I and Fire Burst I to create some yummy steaming Rice. Not only does it taste good, but it replenishes 800 HP!

Branches

The Branches Magnus, which is an ingredient in other weapon-related Special Combos, is one of the easiest to create. Combine a wood Magnus, such as Birch Wood or even a Fishing Pole, with a bladed Magnus, such as a Small Knife, to create Branches. You can't attack or defend with Branches.

Prophet's Notebook

Combine the Blank Notebook with the Magic Pen to create the Prophet's Notebook. This combo's order is *very* important—if you play them out of sequence, the combo will fail. The Prophet's Notebook is a very useful Magnus that, when used in camp, will reveal which Magnus have changed over time.

Monolith Brochure

The Monolith Brochure is a mysterious pamphlet whose pages are blank. Its description says that its contents will change to good or bad, depending on the reader. To create the Monolith Brochure, combine the Monolith Pen with the Blank Notebook.

Tri-Crescendo Job Offer

Both the Monolith Brochure and the Tri-Crescendo Job Offer are clever tongue-in-cheek references to the game's two development companies. Combine the Tri-Crescendo with the Blank Notebook to create the Job Offer. You can't use the Job Offer to attack or defend, but it'll give you a chuckle.

Time-Tempered Treasures

Many Magnus will grow and change as time passes. Some of the most useful ones in the game seem ordinary at first, but over time they will mature to their full potential. Check your Magnus often!

Soy Beans, which replenish a modest 150 HP, will change into Soy Sauce after a certain amount of real time has passed. Soy Sauce is required for several delectable food-related Special Combos.

Birch—a useful Special Combo component—will eventually turn into Birch Sap Gum. The sticky gum refills 250 HP and gives a 30-percent chance to cure Confusion if used to attack, or a 50-percent chance to cure Confusion if used to defend.

Patience Pays Off

One of the most valuable Magnus starts out as a simple Peach. Give it time, though. It will grow into The Peach Boy, then Wonder MOMO, a Magnus that replenishes 2,800 HP and cures all status effects.

Offensive Strategy

All of the game's battles are turn-based and consist of two types of turns—offensive and defensive. When you are executing an offensive turn, your enemies will be taking defensive turns, and vice versa. Some Magnus have only Attack or Defense capabilities, but some (usually weapons) have both. When you are taking an offensive turn, Magnus that have only Defense capabilities will be grayed out.

Elemental Attacks

Figuring out your enemies' elemental nature can be tricky, but it's essential. Watch the color of your foe's attacks and study the final damage screen. In the screenshot to the left, for example, our enemy took 20 percent additional damage from our Water-type attack. Use elemental weaknesses to your advantage!

Speed-Selection

Each character has a limited amount of time to execute turns—a character's alotted time is determined by his or her Agility. You must practice quick strategic thinking and have catlike reflexes each turn.

Neutral Damage

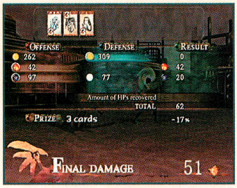
Elemental strengths and weaknesses don't apply to Neutral-based damage, so Neutral-based weapons deal consistent damage. When you play a completely Neutral-based combo, it will hit with full force.

Power Lies in Creating Combos

Some of the more powerful Magnus, such as finishing moves, can be played only as part of a combo. Combos are based on a certain number of Magnus, a specific element, or both. For example, Gibari's Crystal Shot is a Combo 3 Magnus, which means you must play two other Magnus before it. Gibari's Crystal Shot will be grayed out until you play the other two Magnus.

Defensive Strategy

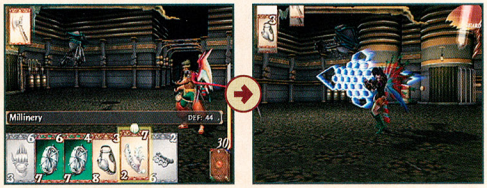
Unlike offensive turns, during which you can attack the enemy and heal and strengthen your party members, a defensive turn is purely about defense. Any Magnus that doesn't have a Defense capability will be grayed out. When you play a combo during a defensive turn, it will decrease the damage you take by a certain percentage.



Elemental Defense

Most Battle Magnus (except Neutral) possess Neutral and elemental Attack and Defense ratings. Neutral Defense protects against Neutral attacks, and elemental Defense against elemental attacks. After all combo and elemental prize percentages are applied, the total damage you take will be calculated.

Balance Makes a Solid Defense



When an enemy attacks you, it will deal elemental and Neutral damage. If you keep one or two defensive Magnus of each element in your deck, you'll be prepared for any battle situation. Beware of playing elemental opposites during a defensive turn—the opposites will cancel out each other's defensive ratings.

Heal and Revive

When a character takes damage or passes out, heal or revive him or her during your next offensive turn. Rare resurrection items, such as the Sacred Wine, are invaluable.

Use the C Stick

As you progress, the Magnus you obtain will have more Spirit Numbers on them. When you play a Magnus in battle, press the C Stick in the direction of the Spirit Number you wish to use.

Deck Building

Maintaining a balance of Magnus types in each character's deck is extremely important—think of it like swapping and upgrading a character's equipment and spells. Always place a few healing Magnus in each deck, and carefully balance the ratio of offensive and defensive Magnus—one defensive Magnus for every three or four offensive Magnus is a good balance. Spirit Numbers and Magnus elements are also crucial to creating a strong deck. Stack it with Magnus that have similar Spirit Numbers and elements. The goal is to be able to create straights and one-of-a-kind combos easily.

Destiny Calls

Now that you've learned all there is to know about the basics of Baten Kaitos's battle system, you're prepared to dive into the adventure. Join us next month when we'll continue our strategic coverage of the fall's most anticipated RPG.

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MARIO PARTY® 6

Keep the party raging with Mario and his friends. The latest installment in the beloved series is packed to the brim with over 80 brand-new minigames! Read on for the scoop.

PARTY ON!

With so many new features and innovations packed into Mario Party 6, it might be simpler to mention what *hasn't* changed. But where's the fun in that? Fans of the series can expect more thrilling minigames to keep them awake 'til the wee hours, but what truly stands out about this tried-and-true crowd-pleaser is all the different ways you can play. Soloists can unlock rare goodies in the game's hearty Solo mode, while herds of party-goers can duke it out across six massive playfields that change shape and have different rules and characters depending on the time of day. Another welcome addition (aside from the snazzier sights and sounds) is the option to speed up gameplay.

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DAY VS. NIGHT

A squabble between heavenly siblings Brighton and Twila must be settled. Only the power of the stars will solve their spat, and it's up to you and your crew of button-mashers to collect and deposit stars in the Star Bank. Every three rounds, day will turn to night, or vice versa, and change the playfield. Contests change in appearance or availability—certain games even flip upside down!

Each of the six Party mode boards transforms at nightfall. The Towering Treetop is flanked by a pair of flowers that will open or close if exposed to sunlight. An open flower will act as a trampoline that will launch your character to a higher platform. When you encounter a closed bud, you must seek an alternate path.

Naughty ne'er-do-wells and sassy spirits come out to play at sundown. Boo opens his shack to all who travel past. You can order him to steal coins or stars from your opponents (he loves doing your dirty work). Other boards play host to a roaming Bowser who will swipe your stars on sight!

Time of day affects minigames, too. When the sun's shining, pesky moles rear their heads *from above* in Mole-It!. You and your teammate must bop more of the furry critters than your opponents in the alotted time.

Some minigames get a visual makeover for nighttime play, but the Mole-It! mechanics change entirely. You must ground-stomp your fuzzy targets under twilight.

MIC MODE

The included microphone allows wannabe Bob Barkers to strut their stuff. Choose from nine separate outings across three distinct types of voice-activated Mic-mode games and mix up the action. Those who aren't feeling chatty can alternately configure the mic games to respond to Controller input, so don't let a sore throat stop your shindig!

Talkie Walkie is one of five "one vs. three" challenges in the Mic Mini-games collection. Verbally guide your character across a bridge while enemies fire away!

Race to the finish line in record time in Star Sprint. Belt out movement commands to control your character and friends, and help them avoid obstacles.

In Speak Up, two to four players compete on a quiz show by answering questions from five categories.

MOUNTAINS OF MINIGAMES

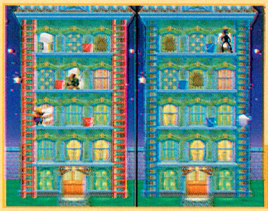
The party's been swinging since 1999, and there's no sign of it slowing down. Crammed into Mario Party 6 are more than 80 new minigames that test your mettle, many of which look and play differently during the day and night cycles. We've collected a sampling to whet your appetite. Escape a runaway boulder one moment, then annihilate opponents in a snowball fight the next!

SLOT TROT

You and your partner must spin your picture wheels to match the symbols at the top of the screen. The first team to score three points wins.

TYPE: TWO VS. TWO

CLEAN TEAM



The tenants of an apartment building can't see through their grime-encrusted windows. One player shoots cleaning foam while the other mans the squeegee in this race for cleanliness.

TYPE: TWO VS. TWO

ROCKY ROAD

Fallen boulders are grinding your cliffside auto race to a halt. Exit your car and bust apart the mammoth stones, then race to the next checkpoint. And you thought traffic in your town was bad?

TYPE: TWO VS. TWO

GRANITE GETAWAY

It's every man for himself in this homage to Indiana Jones. Four players must outrun a giant tumbling rock while dodging piles of junk and rubble. One misstep, and you'll resemble Paper Mario.

TYPE: FOUR-PLAYER

CATCH YOU LETTER

Help the Shy Guy postman collect the scattered letters. Deliver normal mail to score one point, and the lovely pink cards to rack up three points.

TYPE: FOUR-PLAYER

TRAP EASE ARTIST

Collect the most Goombas in your cage to win. You'll have one opportunity to snare the lion's share of the lot, so act quickly! Gold Goombas are worth triple points.

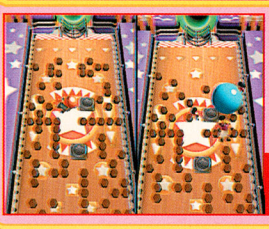
TYPE: FOUR-PLAYER

SNOW BRAWL

It's you and your team of monkeys (by day) or Shy Guys (by night) vs. three opponents in a speed-round snowball fight! Use your partners for cover while pegging the other team.

TYPE: ONE VS. THREE

BALL DOZERS



Have you ever wondered what it's like inside a giant Pachinko machine? In Ball Dozers, you must smash the pins blocking your oversized ball and reach the bottom before the other team.

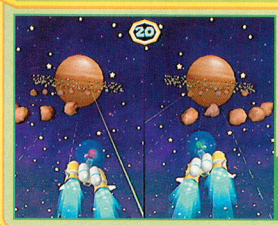
TYPE: ONE VS. THREE

O-ZONE

Keep your eye on the *O*s at the start of the round. Once the board has stopped spinning, the first player to ground-stomp three *O* panels wins the duel.

TYPE: DUEL

ASTEROAD RAGE



Guide your spacecraft through the cluttered asteroid field. The first player to collide with a meteoric meatball loses the round.

TYPE: DUEL

HYPER SNIPER

Lob balls at the brightly colored point panels scrolling up the screen, but be sure to avoid the dreaded Bowser ones—hitting them will wipe out your score!

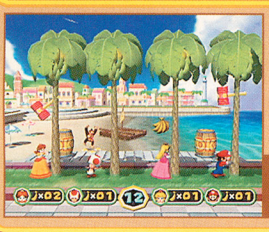
TYPE: BATTLE

STAMP BY ME

Stamp the papers as they zoom past your worker in a race against the clock. Take care to make your mark squarely on the target, or it won't count.

TYPE: BATTLE

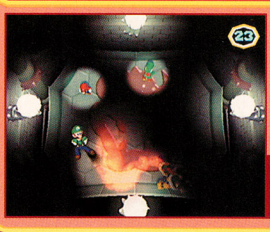
BANANA SHAKE



Donkey Kong will trade you coins for bananas. Shake the tree and catch as many as you can while avoiding the falling hammers. (Who left these mallets up here? Mario, I'm looking at you . . . .)

TYPE: DK

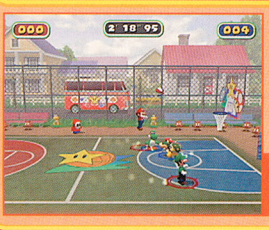
DARK 'N CRISPY



Avoid contact with Bowser (and his flaming breath). He'll zip through the shadows, so watch his movements. Don't fall off the edge, or you'll lose the bout (and an item of Bowser's choice from your inventory).

TYPE: BOWSER

DUNK BROS.



You can unlock this and three other rare minigames by landing on the last board space in Solo mode. Catch air and grab the rim in a high-powered courtside contest.

TYPE: RARE

VERBAL ASSAULT

One player controls a heavily armed battle craft and must avoid destruction as three enemies take aim. Use your MC skills to order attacks and defensive maneuvers.

TYPE: MIC

THIRD TIME'S A CHARM

The third Mario Party title to hit the Nintendo GameCube is the best yet. Gamers of all ages will undoubtedly enjoy the bumper crop of all-new minigames, including those in the addictive Mic modes. Part six of the feature-packed fiesta series is guaranteed to please the crowds for months to come. Mark your calendar and send out the party invitations.

Viewtiful Joe 2

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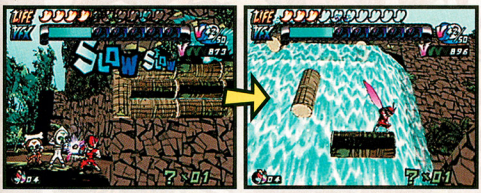
Joe's back and more viewtiful than ever in the red-hot sequel to Capcom's 2003 release, Viewtiful Joe. In this episode, you can control both Joe and his feisty woman, Silvia, in an action-packed, movie-inspired quest to save the world. Grab your Contoller and just go for it!

REEL 1

TEN-MILLION YEARS B.C.

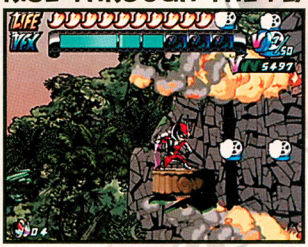
Your first battle takes place in a world where dinosaurs rule. In an obvious ode to *Jurassic Park*, Joe must make haste through the dangerous prehistoric film sets and duke it out with the sinister dino-boss, Drill Sergeant Big John.

RIDE THE LOG FLUME



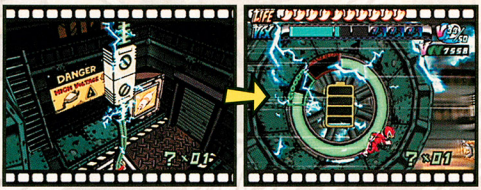
From the highest platform, engage VFX Slow (L Button) to release the log jam and set the wood in motion down the waterfall. Hop from trunk to trunk across the top of the cascade, using your special power when necessary.

RISE THROUGH THE FLAMES



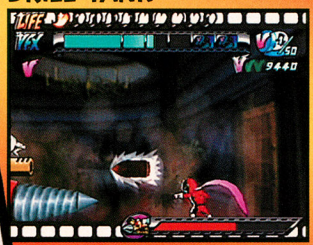
Leap atop the floating platform at the bottom of the gorge, then activate VFX Mach Speed (R Button) to raise the rig. To avoid getting burned, toggle your VFX power on and off as you encounter the timed fire jets. Once you clear the last hazard, float to the top and proceed right.

LAB RAT



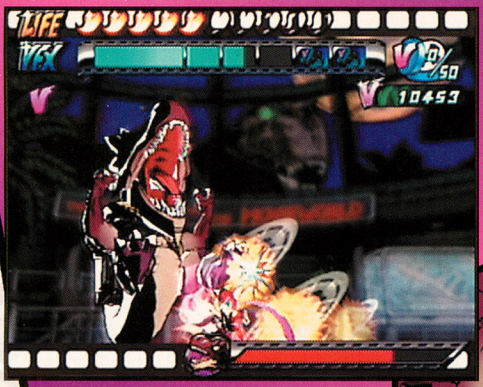
Trigger Joe's VFX Slow power, then punch the power plug with an uppercut (L Button, Down+Y) to close the circuit. Mount the giant hamster wheel, activate VFX Mach Speed (R Button) and run to generate power. Keep your eyes on the power meter and hold steady in the green zone to open the door.

DRILL TANK



Avoid the nimble Drill Tank as it emerges from the floor. Dispatch enemies on foot, but keep an eye on your main target. Trigger VFX Slow when the tank starts shaking and the barrel turns red; it'll fire a projectile at you, which you can punch back to dish out hefty damage.

DRILL SERGEANT BIG JOHN



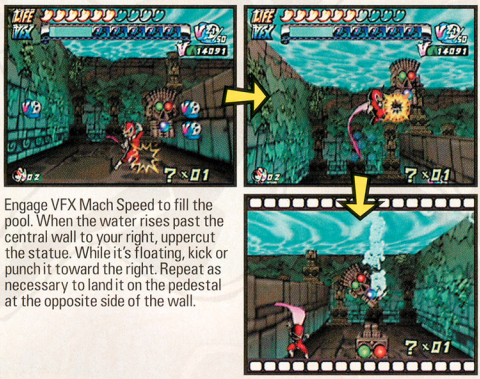
Hop on John's back and pound away while avoiding his swipes, bites and fiery breath. He'll retreat periodically and call in tank fire and napalm barrels; when he returns to the foreground, VFX Slow-kick the fuel barrels his way.

REEL 2

VIEWTIFUL HEROES AND THE STATUE OF DOOM

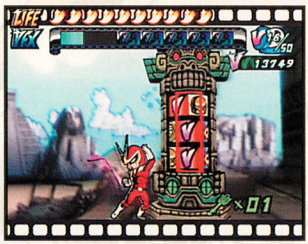
Fast-forward to the 20th century, where Joe and Silvia must surmount all manner of booby traps and solve several mind-numbing puzzles. In the second reel, Silvia gains her dazzling VFX Replay ability, which gives her triple-take power when fighting enemies and smashing objects. Get familiar with swapping your heroes during battle or when brain-busting problems surface; many situations require a particular character.

UNDERWATER ACROBATICS



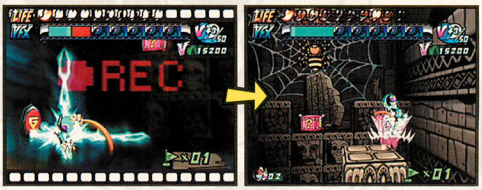
Engage VFX Mach Speed to fill the pool. When the water rises past the central wall to your right, uppercut the statue. While it's floating, kick or punch it toward the right. Repeat as necessary to land it on the pedestal at the opposite side of the wall.

HIT THE JACKPOT



Slow time with your VFX power and punch the column to line up the three red *V*s. If you're low on health, match the cheeseburger icons to boost your Life meter. Avoid lining up the stars—you'll take damage when the structure charges up. Scoring three of the *G* icons will boost your V-Points, which you can use to buy upgrades.

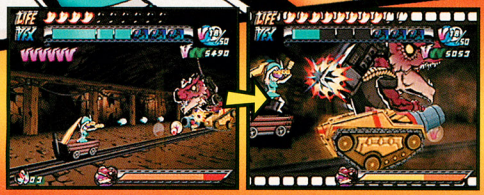
SLOW-MO TRIPLE PLAY



Switch to Silvia and study the timing of the trapdoor in the center of the pit. As the doors close, activate VFX Slow and Replay modes simultaneously (L+R Buttons) and smack the button to your left. Three stone blocks will fall to the floor. Quickly jump on top of the stones and leap to the next platform.

BREAK TIME!

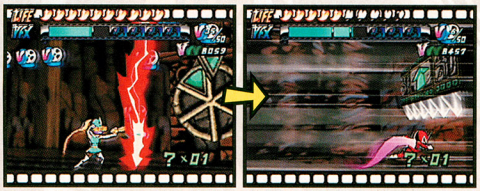
During Break Time! (think intermission), save your game and see what upgrades you can afford. Silvia and Joe each have their own power-ups, which you can purchase at the virtual concession stand. Consider buying the Desperado upgrade for Silvia; the ability's first level lets your heroine wield two guns, and she'll take down enemies in half the time. Remember to save up for mutually beneficial items like L.I.V. and Take 2 as well.



SILVIA'S FIGHT

Though you can use either character, Silvia is a prudent choice for the homage to *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. Fire her guns at the dino, then employ VFX Slow to knock barrels and projectiles back at the tank. Dodge your enemy's whirlwind and stomp attacks. Silvia's guns are great at blasting obstacles off the tracks between bouts.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

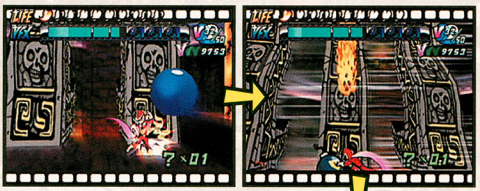


Have Silvia shoot the spinning wheel while in VFX Slow mode and line up the green triangles to deactivate the force field that had prevented you from passing. Switch to Joe and quickly navigate the lava pit hazards. Enable VFX Mach Speed and race under the door before it closes. Slowpokes will be forced to backtrack and repeat the entire process.

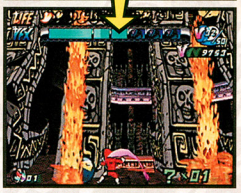
BOMBS AWAY!

Confine your fights to the far left, out of range of the wall-mounted guns. Once you've cleared the room, dash to the far right. Kick or punch the bomb toward the weak tiles in the center of the floor, and trigger VFX Slow as the bomb ignites. Continue to hold the L Button throughout detonation to make the floor collapse from the blast.

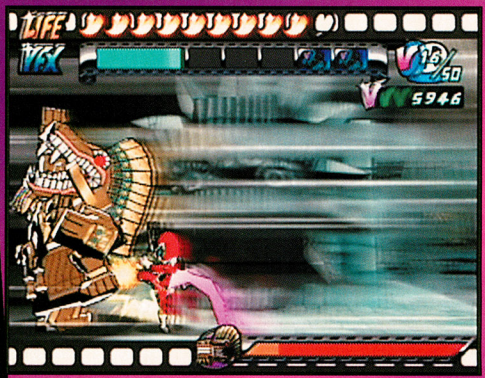
MARBLE MADNESS



After you defeat all enemies on set, a huge, shiny ball will fall from the mouth of the leftmost pillar. Stand on top of it and tilt the Control Stick left to roll the oversized marble to the far right. Dish out a slow-mo uppercut and knock the ball into the mouth on the pillar above you. A bomb will drop; push it left and avoid contact with pouring lava. Ignite the fuse with VFX Mach Speed.



ANCIENT GUARDIAN FLINTY STONE



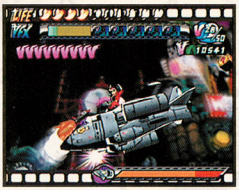
Sneak behind the snot-nosed statue and whale on him with VFX Mach Speed. Beware when Flinty dances a jig—it's your cue to jump away fast, as the boss will fire stone blocks then transform into a flying snake. Dodge its attacks in Slow mode, then repeat your Mach Speed kicks and punches to win.

REEL 3

MEMOIR OF AN INVINCIBLE MONSTER

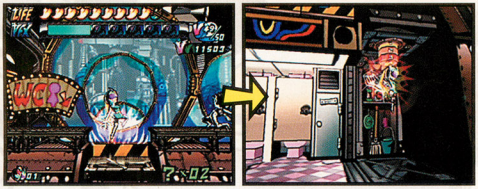
The future looks bleak for Joe and Silvia. In the third reel, they face futuristic flying minibosses, cunning enemies and legions of creepy cops. But there is a bright side—our heroes acquire their third and final VFX power, Zoom In, immediately following their initial bout with the first of two dreaded aerial minibosses.

SKY CAPTAIN



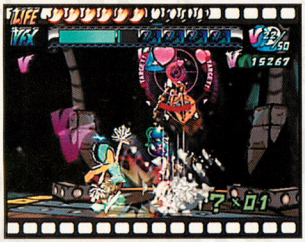
Hop aboard the second jump-jet miniboss and chip away at its red light. Drop to the ground and punch the rockets using VFX Slow mode; if timed properly you will launch them on a collision course with the plane.

LADIES' ROOM



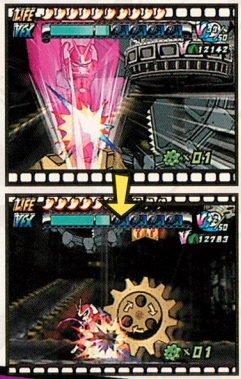
Drop Silvia into the ditch near the transport tube and dodge the flying craft. Jump, then activate VFX Zoom In by flicking the C Stick Up; you'll blast through the ceiling of the ladies' bathroom below. Use VFX Zoom In and Replay, and jump to the overhanging button. Return to the surface and deliver a zoomed-in Replay kick to the columns.

SHORT CIRCUIT



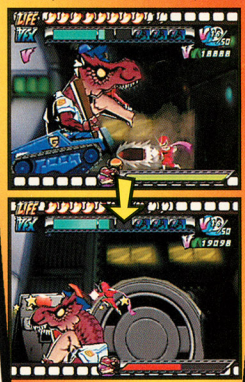
Uppercut the red lever, then defeat the scythe-toting bad guys. At the top of the ramp, use a VFX Slow uppercut and hurl a foe into the electricity. Continue holding the L Button to finish.

PRECISION ENGINEERING



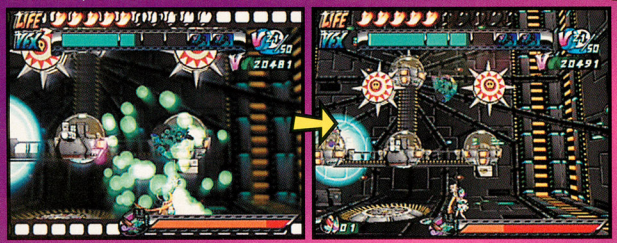
Stand on the brass cog, then jump and activate VFX Zoom In as you fall. Continue down the ramps to the giant machine. VFX Slow-kick the last brass cog into the oversized mechanism, then use zoomed-in Mach Speed punches to get things turning. Hightail it to the top of the ramps while avoiding the silver rolling gears in your path. You can smash the brass ones for health.

TYRANNOSAUR



Enable your VFX Slow power and punch shells back toward the aggressor. Continue your assault while it's dazed, then dodge the subsequent retaliation. Deflect barrels in Slow mode and repeat your attack pattern.

CYBER PHANTOM CAMEO LEON



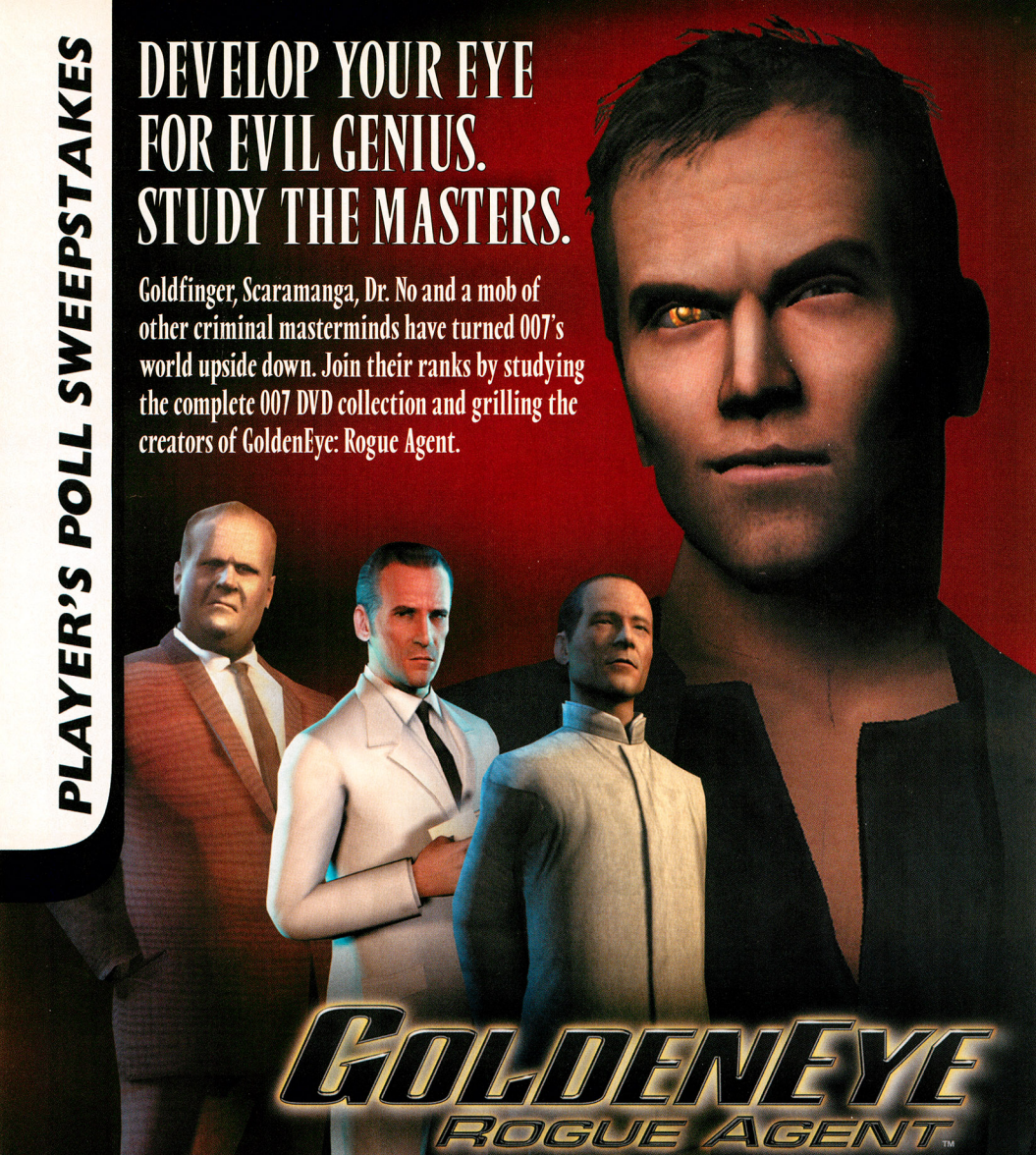
Avoid contact with Leon's tail and tongue, as well as with Dr. Cranken's laser blasts. VFX Slow-punch the hovering discs once they appear in the center of the chamber to release the spikes inside them. When the Cyber Phantom curls into a ball, dish out a slow-mo uppercut and impale the slippery lizard on the barbs above. To replenish your health throughout this long battle, intercept the cheeseburgers that the doctor launches at his pet.

WILL THERE BE A HAPPY ENDING?

Viewtiful Joe 2 keeps the magic alive in a sequel twice as good as the original. There is much work to be done by our brave hero and heroine, and they'll need your lightning-fast reflexes and puzzle-solving talents to prevail. Get comfortable wearing those cheeky superhero getups—when a game is *this* insanely tough, you'll be playing it for a long, long time.

DEVELOP YOUR EYE FOR EVIL GENIUS. STUDY THE MASTERS.

Goldfinger, Scaramanga, Dr. No and a mob of other criminal masterminds have turned 007's world upside down. Join their ranks by studying the complete 007 DVD collection and grilling the creators of GoldenEye: Rogue Agent.



GOLDENEYE ROGUE AGENT™

TEEN T Suggestive Themes Violence CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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VOLUME 187 PLAYER'S POLL SWEEPSTAKES

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A. How old are you?
1. Under 6 2. 6-9 3. 10-12 4. 13-16 5. 17-24 6. 25 or older

B. Sex
1. Male 2. Female

C. What was your favorite strategy article in this issue?
1. Metroid Prime 2 Echoes 2. Baten Kaitos: Eternal Wings and the Lost Ocean
3. Viewtiful Joe 2 4. Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door
5. Kirby & the Amazing Mirror 6. Final Fantasy I & II: Dawn of Souls
7. Donkey Kong Country 2

D. What was your favorite preview or special feature in this issue?
1. Nintendo DS Previews 2. The Real Deal
3. Power Previews 4. Resident Evil 4
5. GoldenEye: Rogue Agent 6. Mario Party 6
7. Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories 8. The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap

E. What do you do with past issues of Nintendo Power?
1. I keep them as reference. 2. I share them with friends.
3. I throw them away. 4. Other.

F. Have you played a Nintendo DS?
1. Yes, I own a DS. 2. Yes, I tried a friend's DS.
3. Yes, I played a DS at a store. 4. No, I haven't played a DS.

G. Which of the following statements most closely describes how you feel about Wario Ware games? Choose one.
1. I've played them, and I like them. 2. I've played them, and I dislike them.
3. I haven't played them, but they look like fun. 4. I haven't played them because they don't look like fun
5. I'm not really familiar with them.

H. Which of the following topics most interests you? Choose one.
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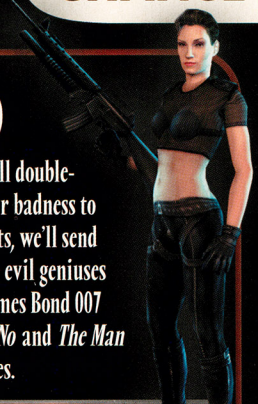


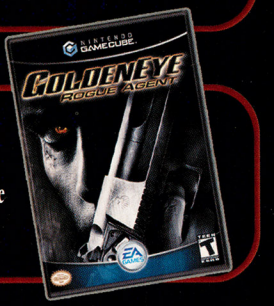
FIRST PRIZE (1 winner)

You'll receive a copy of GoldenEye: Rogue Agent, in which you'll double-deal your way through the criminal underworld and put your badness to the test. To steel your nerves for the mad multiplayer fragfests, we'll send you to Electronic Art's Los Angeles studio to compete with the evil geniuses who developed the game. You'll also get the three-volume James Bond 007 DVD library which includes classic flicks like *Goldfinger, Dr. No* and *The Man with the Golden Gun* and many more examples of evil schemes.

A reconnaissance shot of EA's LA studio, where you'll swim with the sharks.

SECOND PRIZE (15 winners)

You'll take the world by storm with your copy of GoldenEye: Rogue Agent, and look the part with the official game T-shirt.



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Supervillains need wicked threads. Be the first to wear the new 2005 Nintendo Power T-shirt—a diabolical achievement in tee engineering.

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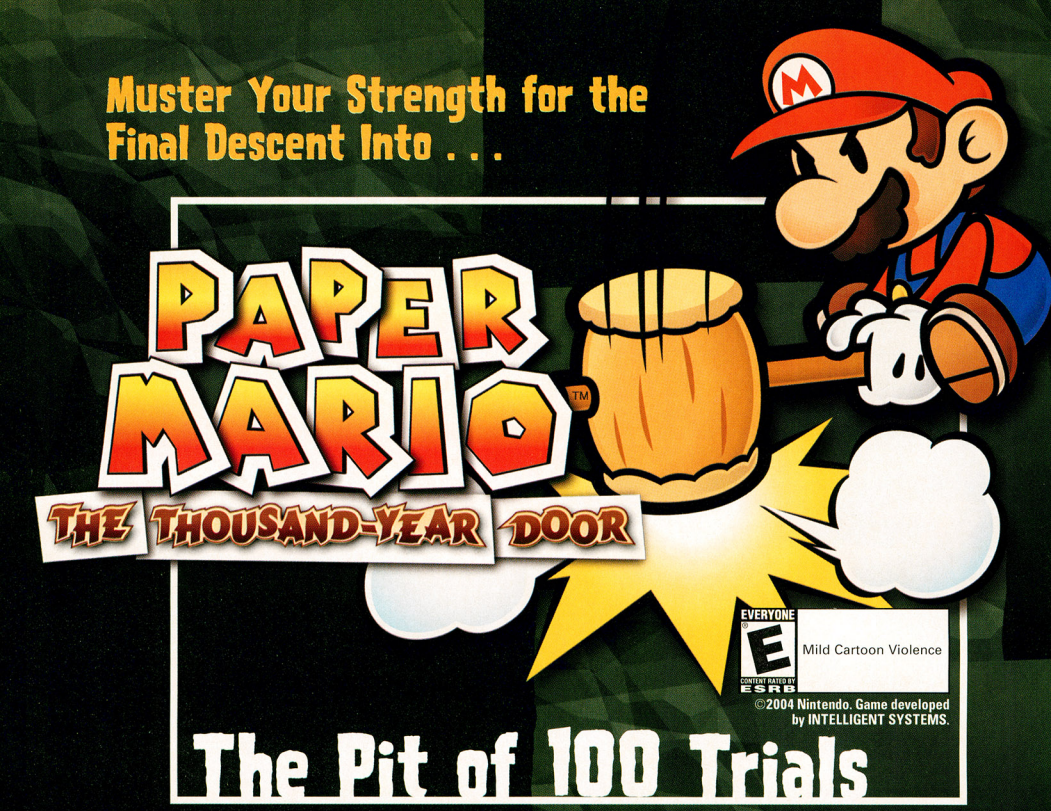
Muster Your Strength for the Final Descent Into . . .

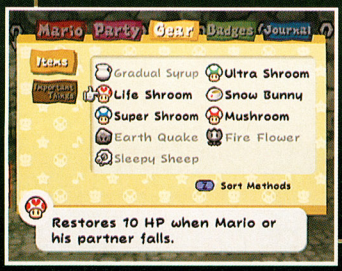


The Pit of 100 Trials

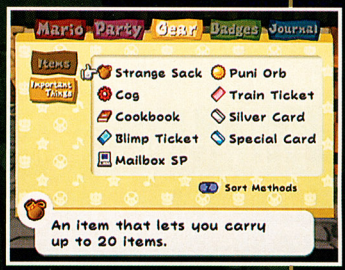
Our final strategy installment for Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door (see Volume 186) is essential reading for those conquering Rogueport's Pit of 100 Trials. Only the toughest need apply for the job, as it will require every ounce of an adventurer's courage and resolve. Save this quest for last—complete the main story and all Trouble Center missions first, or be doomed!

A Room with No View

If the dank atmosphere of the subterranean gauntlet doesn't make you quake in your boots, the hordes of tenacious creatures will. Delve into the pit's chambers at your own risk; there is no turning back on most levels.



Stock up on Ultra Shrooms and Life Shrooms, Boo's Sheets and FP-regenerating items for your journey, and use them only when absolutely necessary; they will prove their worth during your showdown with the ultimate boss, Bonetail. Consider your inventory carefully—each slot is precious.

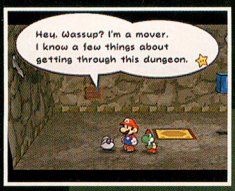


You will double your carrying capacity with the Strange Sack, which is found on level 50 of the pit. It is advisable that you return to the surface, save and restock your supplies before exploring further.

Floor-to-Floor Salesmen

Friends will be few and far between, but you will encounter some helpful folks on your way down. Keep an eye out for the traveling salesman and the Puni mover, and consider using their services.

Save the game before you enter the pit and carry as much cash as your pockets allow. From time to time you'll meet a merchant who's patrolling the pit for buyers. Always take the opportunity to check your inventory. If you've got the cash, replenish any items you used during previous fights. The deeper you descend into the pit, the higher the cost of common goods.



For a fee, Puni movers can transport you down two or five floors, or back to the top of the pit. You can also return topside via warp pipe every 10 floors.

Treasure Chests

On every 10th floor, you will find a treasure chest that contains a valuable item. Listed here are all the riches to be found in the abysmal chasm.

FLOOR	ITEM	FLOOR	ITEM
10	SLEEPY STOMP BADGE	60	DOUBLE DIP BADGE
20	FIRE DRIVE BADGE	70	DOUBLE DIP P BADGE
30	ZAP TAP BADGE	80	BUMP ATTACK BADGE
40	PITY FLOWER BADGE	90	LUCKY DAY BADGE
50	STRANGE SACK	100	RETURN POSTAGE BADGE

A Hive of Scum and Villainy

Most of your favorite vermin will make an appearance during your trials, and they will bring new friends along. Consult the handy list of goons that call this den of displeasure home to the right. They are found nowhere else.

Naturally, things won't get any easier as you approach the final floor. Provided you've completed the main story and the Trouble Center missions, you shouldn't have any problems triumphing on the first 60 floors—especially if you've leveled up to 30 or higher. Concentrate on eliminating the toughest and trickiest foes first. Though the Amazy Dayzee isn't unique to the pit, it's one of your worst enemies. Eliminate the creature on sight, or risk a one-way ticket to the gamer's graveyard.

ENEMY	HP	ATK	DEF
ARANTULA	16	7	0
BOB-ULK	10	4	2
DARK BRISTLE	8	8	4
ELITE WIZZERD	12	8	5
PIRANHA PLANT	15	9	0
POISON PUFF	15	8	0
SPIKY GLOOMBA	7	4	0
SPUNIA	12	7	2
SWAMPIRE	20	6	0

Bonetail

HP	ATK	DEF
200	8	2

Check your badge assignments and heal your party—the ultimate fight on floor 100 is just ahead. You've got one shot at greatness, so make it count!

Unseat the foul-breathed beast by juggling your ally to the front; he'll absorb abuse while you whittle away Bonetail's health with the Power Bounce attack. Engage the Power Lift to boost your attack strength. Use Flurrie's Dodgy Fog or the Boo's Sheet to avoid taking damage.

Only the Strong Survive

Remember to work the crowd and keep your Star Power maxed out—you'll use plenty of special moves during the marathon battle. Though Bonetail has a few tricks in store for you, the skeletal menace will eventually collapse like a house of cards.

Disney | SQUARE ENIX

KINGDOM HEARTS
CHAIN OF MEMORIES

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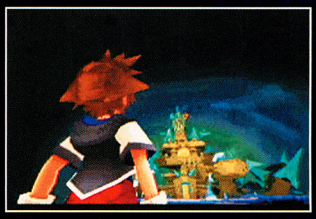
Image illustration by Tetsuya Nomura

EPIC CENTER
SPECIAL PREVIEW

Our most precious memories lie deep in our hearts, out of reach.



HAIL TO THE KINGDOM

Trapped within a castle made of lost memories, Sora must unlock the secrets deep within his heart to find the truth. Last month Nintendo Power gave you a glimpse of the mysterious new GBA title from Square Enix and Disney. This month we'll delve deeper into Castle Oblivion, following Sora and his friends through five of the fun-filled environments. We'll also shed light on the game's unique real-time card-battling system. Sora, along with his companions Donald, Goofy and Jiminy Cricket, must face the Heartless of Castle Oblivion and hold on tight to their memories, or risk losing them forever.

TOUR OF THE WORLDS

To find is to lose and to lose is to find in Castle Oblivion. Inside, Sora, Donald, Jiminy and Goofy will visit many places that seem strangely familiar to them. The following pages will take you on a tour through the first five Disney-themed worlds.

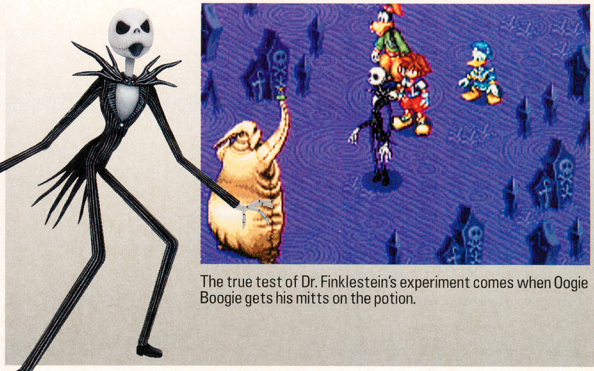
HALLOWEEN TOWN

Jack Skellington, the pumpkin king, will be your guide through this terrifying town from *Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas*. Halloween Town's mad scientist, Dr. Finklestein, has invented a potion that he insists will restore the true memories of the person who drinks it. As Jack attempts to uncover the connection between the potion and the sudden appearance of the Heartless, Sora and crew will cross paths with Jack's sweetheart, Sally, and eventually engage in battle with the evil bag of bugs himself, Oogie Boogie.

Jack's scare tactics will give Donald and Goofy a good fright, but he means no harm.

Finding Sally will help Jack and the others understand the dangers of Dr. Finklestein's memory-revealing potion.

Search Ghosts, Wight Knights and Gargoyles are among the Heartless haunting Halloween Town.



The true test of Dr. Finklestein's experiment comes when Oogie Boogie gets his mitts on the potion.

OLYMPUS COLISEUM

Olympus Coliseum (based on the movie *Hercules*) is home to the Survival Cup, in which Sora and friends will compete for glory. Also enrolled in the competition are the gallant hero Hercules and Cloud, the memorable protagonist from Final Fantasy VII. Cloud has made a deal with Hades to defeat Hercules in exchange for his lost memories. Sora must face off with the sword-wielding Cloud before reaching the finish line and eventually taking on Hades himself.

Sora's competitive nature gets the best of him when he notices a posting for the Olympus Coliseum Survival Cup.

Cloud will be a familiar face to Final Fantasy fans. He is searching for his memories, and will fight anyone in Olympus Coliseum who gets in his way.

Hades, bent on sending Hercules to the underworld forever, will put up a fierce fight.

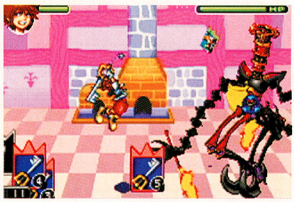
WONDERLAND

Wonderland is strange enough in *Alice In Wonderland,* but it's even more bizarre in Castle Oblivion! When Sora reaches the topsy-turvy world, he'll find Alice being accused of stealing the memory of the Queen of Hearts and of bringing the Heartless to Wonderland. Before Alice's sentence is carried out, Sora must step in on her behalf and fight an army of playing cards. Odd-looking enemies roam Wonderland, including a giant Heartless named Trickmaster. Alice, Sora and the others will have to prove to the queen that her memory was stolen by the Heartless rather than by poor Alice.

The perpetually tardy white rabbit will lead Sora and friends to Alice, who's being accused of stealing the queen's memories.

The Queen of Hearts, confused by the loss of her memory, will punish anyone she thinks might have stolen it.

The riddles of the Cheshire Cat will provide clues to the identity of the real culprit.



In the end, Sora will encounter the true thief of the queen's memories, the Trickmaster.

AGRABAH

Sora's adventure in Agrabah follows a storyline similar to that of the movie *Aladdin*, except with Heartless thrown into the mix. Sora and crew must help Aladdin, a thief from Agrabah, save Princess Jasmine from the double-crossing Jafar. Genie will grant Aladdin three wishes, one of which Aladdin has promised to use to free Genie. Sora will need to face off with the Heartless of Agrabah, as well as Jafar, before finding a path to the next level of Castle Oblivion.

To save Princess Jasmine, Aladdin will be forced to sacrifice one of his precious wishes.

Sora must find the appropriate cards to open all the doors in town.

The scimitar-wielding Bandits attack swiftly; the Fat Bandits move slowly but repel frontal attacks.

While balancing on the unstable ground beneath him, Sora will fight Jafar, who has wished himself into an all-powerful Genie.

MONSTRO

Jiminy Cricket will encounter some old friends on the Monstro level of Castle Oblivion, which is based on the movie *Pinocchio*. Having recently been reunited with his father, Geppetto, Pinocchio is trapped inside the belly of a whale named Monstro. To help the puppet and his father escape, Sora and friends will need to explore the depths of the whale and defeat the Heartless within it. Meanwhile, every lie Pinocchio tells causes his nose to grow. Jiminy, Sora and the others must teach Pinocchio how to tell the truth before their adventure inside Monstro ends.

Sora will need to defeat the Parasite Cage in battle to save Pinocchio and learn how to escape from Monstro.

When Sora battles a large group of Heartless, he irritates Monstro's belly enough to force a giant sneeze.

Geppetto the wood worker, while trying to save his creation and son, Pinocchio, got trapped inside Monstro's belly. Sora and friends must help father and son find a way out.

DEAL YOUR DESTINY

Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories contains hundreds of cards that you can collect and use in a variety of ways throughout your adventure. You'll earn most cards by defeating enemies or by searching each level thoroughly.

CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS

Character cards are the coolest cards in the game, hands down. Some of them allow Sora to summon various Disney and Final Fantasy characters into battle, and others act as power-ups when you press Select. Character cards keep the battle system interesting, enabling you to try different strategies by mixing them with other types of cards in your deck.

Cloud, a character from Final Fantasy VII, will unleash successive sword attacks when summoned.

Some characters will perform one of several possible attacks. Genie, for instance, will cast Thundara, Gravira or Stopra when summoned.

You'll earn Donald, Goofy and Mickey cards randomly during battle by landing a blow on an enemy. Once you use a card, it'll be gone until you find another.

Certain character cards, like Hades, will give you advantages over your enemy when used. Access power-up cards in your deck by pressing Select during battle.

Character cards such as Donald and Oogie Boogie have regenerative powers. Donald will sometimes restore your HP and attack the enemy in a single turn.

CARD COMBOS

In addition to character cards, you'll find attack cards and magic cards to use in battle. All cards can be grouped into sets of three to unleash a combo attack on your enemies. A group of three attack cards will allow Sora to perform a variety of physical combos using his Keyblade. Three magic cards used simultaneously will create a new, more-powerful spell. Multiple character cards of the same type will increase that character's summoning power.

Damage inflicted by Simba's Proud Roar will multiply if you use two or three Simba cards at once in a card combo.

Three Blizzard cards, when combined, will freeze foes with the Blizzaga spell.

ON LOCATION

Chain of Memories has two kinds of location cards: map cards and world cards. You can earn most map cards by defeating enemies. Every map card has a color, a number and a type. The color and number determine if the map card will open a door, and the type affects what will appear on the other side of the door. You'll receive a world card after you clear an area. The card will allow you to return to the cleared area any time.

If a Tranquil Darkness map card is used to unlock a door, very few Heartless will occupy the room on the other side.

World cards represent the different worlds you've visited in the game. You can access these cards using World Warps.

DECKED OUT

Battling isn't just about choosing a card to attack with. Each boss is different, and you'll need a unique deck to defeat it. You are allowed to keep three separate decks, but only one can be equipped at any given time. Your decks are ever-evolving; you can edit them as you collect new cards throughout the game. The number of Card Points you've earned determines which cards your deck can handle.

Adding and removing cards from your deck is easy. You can even name your decks to help keep track of them.

Deck strategies will vary based on which enemy you are facing.

RELIVE YOUR MEMORIES

In Chain of Memories, Square Enix has mixed elements of real-time and turn-based battle to create an adventure unlike any other. The worlds of Disney and Final Fantasy have collided once again, this time in a dreamlike castle crafted from fragments of Sora's memory. To survive Castle Oblivion and unravel the mysteries of the organization that controls it, Sora will need to trust his friends more than ever.

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EPIC CENTER

In this month's Epic Center special, we'll explore the first three areas of EA's The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age for the GCN. Uruk-hai, Ringwraiths and the rest of Sauron's minions beware—the people of Middle-earth have united, and brave new heroes have risen.

EPIC TACTICS

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE THIRD AGE™

TEEN T Violence
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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Middle-earth's Fate Is in Your Hands

The game's story takes place during the tumultuous Third Age of Middle-earth, shortly after the Fellowship of the Ring sets out on its perilous quest to destroy the One Ring. You assume the roles of warriors who will follow in the Fellowship's footsteps. Although your initial quest is different from theirs, your destinies are intertwined.

Lead the Forces of Mordor in Evil Mode

In Evil mode, you control Sauron's minions in a quest to thwart the heroes. Once you clear an area in the normal mode, you can play through it in Evil mode (select the option from the title screen). When you complete an area in Evil mode, you'll earn new equipment that your characters can use in the normal mode—the equipment is obtainable only in Evil mode.

Battle Evil Together

Trek across Middle-earth with a friend in Co-op mode. You control Berethor, Elegost and Morwen, plus allies such as Gandalf; player two controls Idrial, Hadhod and Eaoden.

A New Chapter Unfolds

You begin as Berethor, a Captain in the Gondorian Citadel Guard. Your steward has sent you to the northlands on a quest to locate Boromir. New friends and allies will join your cause as you're swept up in events that will change all of Middle-earth.

Eregion

Your tale begins in Eregion, an uninhabited forest realm that lies south of Rivendell and west of the Misty Mountains. Shortly after you enter the area, a Lothlorien Elven Scout named Idrial will save you from Ringwraiths, then join you. Her Elven magic will be invaluable to your cause. As you explore Eregion, keep an eye out for treasure chests—they contain valuable items and equipment.

Quests (in order of completion)
• Journey to the Elf Outpost
• Defend the Elf Caravan
• Hunt the Wild Men
• Rescue at Caradhras Pass
• Hunt all Warg Packs in the Area
• Follow Fellowship to Moria
• Find an Elf Healing Altar
• Defend Elf Healing Altars
• Reclaim Elrond's Map
• Find Hadhod the Dwarf
• Collect Elf Artifacts
• Find Moria's West Gate

In each area, you'll obtain a variety of quests. The order in which you receive quests corresponds with their order in your Quest Journal, but it is often different from the order in which you actually complete them. We'll list each area's quests in order of completion.

Eregion Enemies

Recently Eregion, like many other regions of Middle-earth, has been plagued by hordes of Sauron's minions. Together, you and Idrial must overcome foes including Orcs, Wild Men and Wargs to reach Moria, to the east.

ORCS

The Orcs who have invaded Eregion consist of Archer Rabble, Sword Warriors, Lesser Captains, Shadow Chieftains and Armored Sword Veterans. Take out any Chieftains and Veterans first—they are the most powerful. Orcs are particularly vulnerable to water-based Spirit Powers, such as Idrial's Loudwater Fury. Berethor's Orc Bane Sword Craft attack is also extremely powerful against them.

WILD MEN

Wild Men from Dunland have been raiding Eregion. Though their numbers are few, they are formidable. The Sword Warriors are stronger than the Sword Rabble, so focus on them first—their Dunland Slash and Wild Strike attacks can deal heavy damage, especially to Idrial. You must defeat three of the Wild Men war bands to complete the Hunt the Wild Men quest.

Character Skills and Skill Trees

Each character possesses a set of unique skills that allow him to perform special actions in battle. When a character uses a skill in battle, he earns skill points for the corresponding skill tree. Once a character masters a skill, the skill that follows it in the skill tree will become available.

BERETHOR

Berethor's Leadership skills, which are all group-enhancement abilities, are extremely useful—especially later in the game. Use them in battle often to unlock new Leadership skills.

IDRIAL

Idrial's Spirit Powers skills are invaluable—they include several heals, cures and other beneficial skills—but her Sword Craft skills are just as important. Use both skill trees in battle to balance her skills.

ELEGOST

Some of the skills in Elegost's Bow Craft tree, such as Creature Bane, are quite powerful but focus on his Ranger Craft skills first. They offer the widest variety of abilities, such as Arrows of Sleep, Kingsfoil Grace and Northern Storm.

HADHOD

Hadhod's strongest skills are without a doubt in his Axe Craft tree, but his Spirit Powers are pretty handy, too. Goblin Bane, the second skill in his Axe Craft skill tree, and Flaming Fury, the second skill in his Spirit Powers skill tree, are invaluable in Moria.

LESSER STARVING WARGS

After you meet Elegost, you'll battle several Lesser Starving Wargs. Use Elegost's Creature Bane Bow Craft attack against nonhumanoid beasts such as Wargs to deal devastating damage. Focus all your attacks on one Warg at a time and use Idrial's Gift of Elrond to heal your party. Destroy three Warg packs in Eregion to complete the Hunt all Warg Packs in the Area quest.

THE WATCHER IN THE WATER — 2,178 HP

At the entrance to Western Moria, The Watcher in the Water will attack your group. Use Idrial's Haste of the Elves to raise each character's speed, and Berethor's Company Might to increase each character's attack damage. The beast is weak to fire, and you can strike it only with ranged attacks—Elegost's Creature Bane and Hadhod's Flaming Fury work best.

Western Moria

Moria, the vast realm of the Dwarves, is split into two areas—Western Moria and Eastern Moria. Once a mighty Dwarven kingdom and network of rich mines, Moria has been reduced to little more than ruins and rubble by a terrible but long-forgotten war. Swarms of dark monstrosities have made their home in Moria's winding tunnels and gaping caverns. You and your companions must travel deep into Moria and overcome its perils to reach the other side of the Misty Mountains.

Quests

- Confront The Watcher in the Water
- Locate Moria's Great Pit
- Find the Book of Secrets
- Find Seven Dwarf Runes
- Find the Chamber of Records

Character Stats and Stat Points

When a character gains a level, he earns Stat Points that you can distribute among stats such as Strength and Spirit. A character's stats influence various aspects of his battle abilities.

STRENGTH

Strength increases the base damage a character can deal with a melee or ranged weapon. The stat is important for characters such as Berethor, Hadhod and Elegost, who rely on weapons primarily.

SPIRIT

Spirit increases a character's max Action Points (AP) and the base damage of his Spirit Powers. High Spirit is important for characters, such as Idrial, who use a good deal of magic.

CONSTITUTION

Constitution increases a character's max HP by a great deal and raises his defense against Spirit Power attacks. Make sure every character has a decent Constitution stat—you can never have enough Spirit Power defense and HP!

SPEED

Speed increases a character's battle initiative and defense against melee and ranged attacks. (Initiative influences where a character appears in the battle queue.) It also decreases the time between a character's attacks.

DEXTERITY

Dexterity increases a character's chance of successfully hitting enemies with melee or ranged attacks. Dexterity, like Strength, is important for any character who uses weapons for the majority of attacks.

Western Moria Enemies

Countless Moria Goblins and Albino Cave Wargs lurk within Western Moria's abandoned depths. Be on your guard.

THE WATCHER IN THE WATER — 2,178 HP

The Watcher in the Water is back, and it's exactly as it was in Eregion. Use the same strategy as before—strike with ranged attacks and skills such as Elegost's Beast Bane and Hadhod's Fire Fury. If you want to deal a little more damage, use Idrial's Loudwater Fury. It has a significant effect despite the beast's innate strength against water-based Spirit Powers.

ALBINO CAVE WARGS

Albino Cave Wargs look similar to their tawny-furred cousins, but they're much stronger. Like most of Moria's inhabitants, they are weak to water-based Spirit Powers, such as Idrial's Loudwater Fury, but strong against fire-based ones. One or two rounds of Loudwater Fury and Creature Bane is all it takes to defeat an Albino Cave Warg.

MORIA GOBLIN ARCHER RABBLE

Moria Goblin Archer Rabble are the weakest of the Moria Goblins, but they have high initiative, they counterattack often, and their shots rarely miss. They have only one skill, Goblin Arrow, which is their normal ranged attack. As with all Goblins, they are strong against fire and weak to water—Idrial's Loudwater Fury and Hadhod's Goblin Bane will make quick work of them.

MORIA GOBLIN SWORD WARRIORS

Moria Goblin Sword Warriors, the lesser Moria Goblin melee class, have two attacks: Goblin Thrust, a normal attack, and Leaping Slash, an attack that has a high chance of scoring a critical hit. You may encounter a few Shadow Chieftains grouped with Sword Warriors in Western Moria, but they are much more numerous in Eastern Moria (see page 111).

MORIA GOBLIN SWORD VETERANS

The most formidable Moria Goblins are the Sword Veterans. They wield two sharp blades, have a strong counterattack and use three skills—Rending Blades, Triple Slash and Stun Strike. When you're facing Sword Veterans, use Berethor's Stand Fast Leadership skill to render your party immune to stun effects, such as those from Stun Strike, for the duration of the battle.

Eastern Moria

The trials you conquered in Western Moria were only a small taste of what awaits your group in Eastern Moria. Beware of what lies in the shadows as you travel through the Great Halls and the ruins of Dwarrowdelf, the underground Dwarf city. All the while, the Moria Goblins are closing in on you. Travel through Eastern Moria to the Bridge of Khazad-dum—there you will discover an abomination unlike anything you've faced.

Eastern Moria Enemies

Moria Goblins and Cave Trolls infest the crumbling halls of Eastern Moria. The trolls and a few of the Goblin classes are new, but the majority of the enemies are the same ones you encountered in Western Moria. Now there are just more of them—a lot more.

Quests

- Find Balin's War Axe
- Find the Dwarf Lord Statue
- Slay Goblin Spirit Wielder
- Stop the Goblin Drummer
- Find Dwarven Dragon Armor
- Kill the Goblin Chieftain
- Find the Goblin Bow
- Reach the Bridge of Khazad-dum
- Kill Nine Trolls of Moria
- Find Lorien's Golden Helm

CAVE TROLL RABBLE

Cave Troll Rabble have high Defense, Strength and HP, and no vulnerabilities, but they have low Speed. Use Idrial's Weakening Slash, Berethor's Shattering Strike and Elegoth's Piercing Might. Additionally, raise your party's Attack with Berethor's Company Might, and its Speed with Idrial's Haste of the Elves. The Cave Troll Rabble are the first step in the Kill Nine Trolls of Moria quest.

CAVE TROLL SHADOW CHIEFTAINS

Like the lesser Moria Troll Rabble, Cave Troll Shadow Chieftains have no vulnerabilities and are extremely strong. Their skills—Darkest Renewal, Battle March and Sonic Fury—are capable of healing and hastening their allies and dealing damage to a group of foes. A Cave Troll Shadow Chieftain and its ally, a Cave Troll Rabble, are the final two Cave Trolls you must destroy to complete the Kill Nine Trolls of Moria quest.

GOBLIN SPIRIT WIELDER

When you reach the Balrog Altar, three Moria Goblins will ambush you: a Shadow Chieftain flanked by two Sword Veterans. The Shadow Chieftain is the Spirit Wielder, but it bears no special title while you're fighting it. The three Goblins are no different from those you have fought before. Dispatch them to complete the Slay Goblin Spirit Wielder quest.

MORIA GOBLIN DRUMMER

The Moria Goblin Drummer isn't very strong, but you must defeat its guards—two Goblin Veterans and a Shadow Chieftain—before you can attack it. Once you defeat all three, you'll have a shot at the Drummer. Attack it with ranged skills, such as Idrial's Loudwater Fury and Elegost's Aimed Shot. Win the battle to complete the Stop the Goblin Drummer quest.

MORIA GOBLIN SHADOW CHIEFTAINS

Moria Goblin Shadow Chieftains use the dark Spirit Powers such as Dark Renewal and Flames of Udun to support their allies and damage their foes. When you encounter a group that includes a Shadow Chieftain, always focus on defeating it first. The subject of the Kill the Goblin Chieftain quest lies deep within Eastern Moria.

THE BALROG OF MORGOTH

— 50,673 HP

When you reach the Bridge of Khazad-dum, you will witness Gandalf battling a horrible monster of fire and shadow—The Balrog of Morgoth. Berethor and the others will run to the grey wizard's aid (after disposing of a pair of Trolls). The Balrog is extremely powerful. Its Pillar of Wrath attack is strong enough to wipe out your entire party in one round if you aren't prepared. The key to defeating the Balrog is to let Gandalf do the damage—focus on keeping him and your party members alive. Use Gandalf's Bolt of the Valar to whittle down the Balrog's health.

Aid the Fellowship

Your journey across Middle-earth has only begun. You have six more areas to explore. Your next destination is the East Emnet Gullies, where Berethor comes to the end of his initial quest but begins another. Press onward, brave heroes—two more companions and a wealth of adventure await you.

Kirby™ & The AMAZING MIRROR

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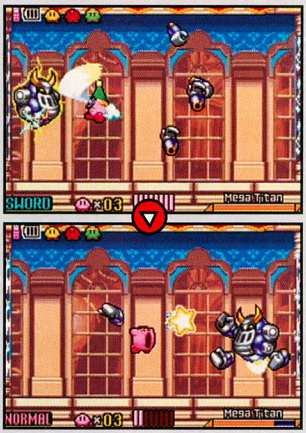
A WORLD IN PERIL

We left off last month after Kirby and company obtained the mirror shard in Area 4: Mustard Mountain. This month, we'll reveal how to obtain the remaining five shards and free the Mirror World from darkness.

Last month we made a small mistake—the first Mirror Shard is in Area 2: Moonlight Mansion, not Area 1: Rainbow Road. There are eight shards total.

Mega Titan

AREA 5: CARROT CASTLE



Grab the Sword copy ability from Carrot Castle before you enter the boss chamber—it's the best weapon against Mega Titan. Avoid the boss's four rocket-powered fists. Attack from the center of the room to push it into the electric walls on either side—only they can harm Mega Titan. Repeat the process to defeat its body, then take out its head to finish it off. If you're hit, grab your copy ability before it hits the electric walls, or you'll lose it. If all else fails, inhale stars and blast your foe with them.

Gobbler

AREA 6: OLIVE OCEAN

Kirby's Sword copy ability is one of the few that will work underwater, so it's ideal for taking on Olive Ocean's boss, Gobbler. If the finny foe hits you, hop onto one of the platforms and inhale to retrieve your copy ability. Strike Gobbler and its mini cohorts with the Sword, or spit water at them; if you enter the water, be careful not to get gobbled up!

Wiz

AREA 7: PEPPERMINT PALACE

Copy abilities that allow you to attack from a distance, such as Sword, Beam, or Laser, work well against Peppermint Palace's boss. Position yourself on the center platform and attack Wiz—you can't harm it when it's hidden in its top hat. Wiz will summon a wide array of enemies and items, which you can use as ammo if you lose your copy ability.

Unknown

AREA 8: RADISH RUINS

The identity of the Radish Ruins boss is unknown, but the creature closely resembles Meta Knight. Kirby's Burning ability is hands-down the best choice for the battle, but Sword does well, too. You can find the Burning copy ability on your way to the boss—if you lose it, grab the Sword copy ability in the room before you reach the mysterious foe. Your adversary is quick on his feet and skilled with his blade, but he's no match for our four heroes.

Master Hand and Crazy Hand

AREA 9: CANDY CONSTELLATION

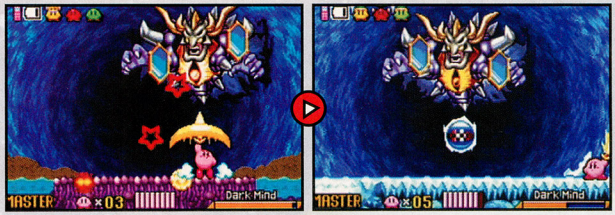
Candy Constellation is home to a pair of bosses—Master Hand and Crazy Hand. Attack one hand at a time as Sword or Fire Kirby. Get out of the way when the pair claps, or you'll be squashed between them.

After you defeat one of the hands, the battle will become significantly easier. A single hand can't clap, but it can still smash, grab, and shoot you. Attack between the gloved boss's moves—take to the air or run along the ground to dodge.

Dark Meta Knight and Dark Mind

INSIDE THE AMAZING MIRROR: DARK MIND

Once you repair the Amazing Mirror, leap inside it. Your first opponent is Dark Meta Knight—use Burning Kirby to blast him out of existence. Watch out for his whirlwind and ranged attacks.



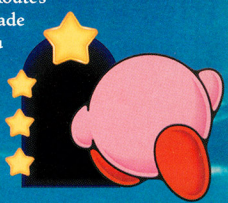
You'll earn the Master copy ability after you defeat Dark Meta Knight—the powerful sword works on all puzzles. You must battle Dark Mind's first form four times, so grab the power-ups between fights. Stand below the boss and thrust the sword up into the eye in its chest. Use ranged attacks when Dark Mind is to your left or right, and destroy any bombs the beast drops.

Dark Mind's second form has the same weakness as its first—the eye. Jab it when it opens, and destroy the mirror shields the boss summons. Dark Mind will also call forth enemies; defeat them, use them as ammo or swallow them to gain copy abilities.

Dark Mind's last stand takes place in the clouds as a top-down-view shootout. To avoid the dark stars the boss shoots, move your Warpstar from side to side. Tap A rapidly to blast Dark Mind with light stars. Once you defeat the boss, the Mirror World will be saved!

GOOD TRIUMPHS!

After you vanquish Dark Mind, you can return to the Mirror World to experience the fun all over again. The Master copy ability will be standing on a pedestal beneath the Amazing Mirror in Rainbow Route's mirror hall; the legendary blade is yours to wield whenever you wish. If you strive to earn 100-percent game completion, scour the Mirror World's nine areas to locate every last collectible—only then will your task be truly complete!



FINAL FANTASY I & II

DAWN OF SOULS

Square Enix's signature series is reborn on the GBA, and this time it's published by Nintendo. The graphics are more detailed than they were in their original NES and Famicom forms, the music is crystal clear and both epics have significant extras that were not part of a recent PS One console reissue. Immerse yourself in a new and vibrant retelling of an RPG legend.

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Fantasy Violence
Language

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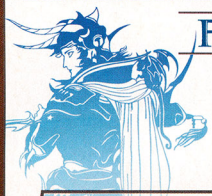


FINAL FANTASY

The world's life force is dissipating under the power of an unknown menace. Prophecy predicts that four Warriors of Light will restore the planet's life—and lo and behold, four heroes appear, each with a crystal that requires illumination. So begins your adventure.

01 CORNELIA
02 CHAOS SHRINE
03 MATOYA'S CAVE
04 PRAVOKA
05 ELFHEIM
06 WESTERN KEEP
07 MARSH CAVE
08 MT. DUERGAR
09 MELMOND
10 CAVERN OF EARTH
11 GIANT'S CAVE
12 SAGE'S CAVE

PARTY POLITICS

The Warriors of Light come from six fighting classes, which range in strength, agility and spell-casting ability. Although you can build your party any way you like, it's best to form a well-rounded group. As they advance, your party members will gain experience and strengthen their abilities. After they deliver the Rat's Tail to the Dragon King, they'll undergo class changes.

WARRIOR

Warriors are able to equip the most-powerful weapons and armor. Additionally, their hit-point capacity increases at a faster rate than any other class's. When Warriors change classes, they transform into Knights and learn limited white-magic-casting power.

THIEF

High Evasive, Agility and Luck make Thieves a wily bunch. When enemies attack Thieves, they are more likely to miss than when they battle any other class. The class change turns Thieves into Ninjas and gives them the power to use black-magic spells up to level 4.

WHITE MAGE

Healing and defending other party members is the arena of White Mages. They are able to learn white-magic spells only, and their physical-fighting abilities are low. After the class change, White Mages transform into White Wizards and learn advanced magic spells.

BLACK MAGE

The counter to White mages, Black Mages can learn enemy-damaging black magic, but no white magic. Like White Mages, they are not great physical fighters. Black Mages become Black Wizards, gaining the ability to use the most-powerful black magic.

RED MAGE

Well-rounded sorcerers, Red Mages are able to learn a limited number of both white- and black-magic spells. They are also superior fighters compared to White Mages and Black Mages. Red Mages become Red Wizards and learn the ability to cast medium-strength spells of both types.

MONK

Naturally gifted fighters, Monks battle with their bare hands. They also demonstrate strong defensive abilities, without need for sophisticated armor. Monks become Masters, and they continue to bolster their strengths in hand-to-hand combat. But unlike Knights, they do not take on magic abilities.

01 CORNELIA

The story starts with your arrival at the gates of Cornelia. When you step into the town, you'll discover places to buy basic weapons and armor for your entire party, and people who will teach you the lay of the land. Talk to one of the guards in town or advance to the castle and earn an audience with the king. He'll tell you of the prophecy of the Warriors of Light and ask you to save his daughter from the Chaos Shrine.

FIGHT GOBLINS, GAIN GIL AND EXPERIENCE

Before you move on to the Chaos Shrine, patrol the forest and plains near Cornelia. You'll engage in easy battles against weak enemies and amass both gil and experience. Once your battlers have increased their levels, return to town, purchase more equipment, then rest at Cornelia Inn.

02 CHAOS SHRINE

Once your party is rested and equipped with the best available items, advance to the Chaos Shrine, northwest of Cornelia. You'll find a Leather Cap in the shrine's southwest corner, but you won't be able to get the shrine's blades until you have the Mystic Key. Move on to the center of the shrine to the first boss, Garland, and Princess Sarah.

GARLAND

HP	ATK	ACC	DEF	AGI	INT	EVA	M. DEF	GIL	EXP	WEAKNESS
212	15	27	8	6	12	12	64	250	130	None

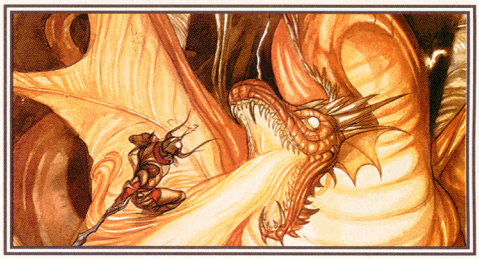
Your party member should be at level three or four when you challenge Garland. If your fighters are low on hit points, use the Cure spell or Potions to heal them, or consider a quick trip back to Cornelia. The beast is strong against magic, but the Fire spell is as effective as any available weapon.

RETURN TO CORNELIA

After you defeat Garland, you'll follow Sarah to Cornelia. There your party's fate as the Warriors of Light will be sealed. The king will have a bridge built for you, and Sarah will give you a Lute after you speak to her one-on-one.

03 MATOYA'S CAVE

Advance directly north from Cornelia and cross the bridge. Continue north to Matoya's Cave. The witch will tell you about her missing Crystal Eye, and you'll discover a backward-written clue about how to see the world map (press B and Select).



04 PRAVOKA

Travel south then due east to Pravoka. Resurrect downed mates if you have to, stay at the inn and purchase new equipment, then fight pirate captain Bikke's gang for their ship.

PIRATES

HP	ATK	ACC	DEF	AGI	INT	EVA	M. DEF	GIL	EXP	WEAKNESS
24	10	2	0	6	3	12	35	40	40	None

Bikke's pirates aren't as strong as some of the enemies out in the field, but there are a lot of them. Hit them with the Sleep spell during your first turn, then have at the snoozing buccaneers. Your prize for victory will be a pirate ship, docked outside of town.

05 ELFHEIM

Sail south to Elfheim, visit the grave of a fighter named Link, and buy as much advanced equipment and as many advanced spells (such as Cura, Heal and Poisona) as you can afford. Then visit the castle, where you'll find another royal in trouble. The quest to wake the elf prince will lead you to several locations.

06 WESTERN KEEP

Advance northwest of Elfheim to the Western Keep. A man who identifies himself as a king will explain that he has lost his crown. Add him to the list of people who need your help.

07 MARSH CAVE

You'll find the king's misplaced crown in the Marsh Cave. Before you venture to the enemy-loaded area, make sure your party members are at level 10 or higher, and are fully rested. Once you enter the cave, venture south and look for a ladder. Climb down it, travel south then east and descend another ladder. You'll pluck the crown from a chest in a small alcove near the center of a large chamber after a battle against Piscodemons.

PISCODEMONS

HP	ATK	ACC	DEF	AGI	INT	EVA	M. DEF	GIL	EXP	WEAKNESS
84	30	21	16	33	18	66	98	300	276	None

The number of Piscodemons that you'll face varies, so prepare for eight or nine. The creatures withstand magic attacks better than they do physical attacks. If you have a character who is adept at both forms of combat, have him get physical. A few strong rounds should do the trick.

06 WESTERN KEEP

You've been duped! The creature who claimed to have lost his crown is none other than Astos, the king of the Dark Elves and the one who cast the sleeping spell on the prince of Elfheim. When you return to the Western Keep with the crown, Astos will fight you for the item. By defeating the beast, you'll get a new bauble of your own. Prepare for the fight with a trip to Elfheim.

ASTOS

HP	ATK	ACC	DEF	AGI	INT	EVA	M. DEF	GIL	EXP	WEAKNESS
420	30	42	18	39	24	78	170	2,000	2,250	None

Blue beast Astos can withstand a strong beating and will counter with the Death spell, which KOs a member of your party instantly. Your physical fighters should attack with their strongest weapons, and your magic users should cast a combination of Fira and Silence on the target, and Haste and Invis on their allies.

03 MATOYA'S CAVE

On your first visit to Matoya's Cave, you learned that the sorceress was missing her Crystal Eye. That's the prize that you earned for defeating Astos. Return to Matoya's Cave and give her the item. She'll return the favor by handing over a Jolt Tonic, just what you need to wake the prince.

05 ELVEN CASTLE

Enter the Elven Castle, adjacent to Elfheim, and give the Jolt Tonic to the prince's healer. After the healer administers the medicine, the prince will arise from his sleep and reward you with the Mystic Key.

LAST CHANCE FOR GOLD NEEDLES

The beings in the Cavern of Earth have a penchant for turning their enemies into stone. To counter their spells, you'll need Gold Needles, which cure Stone. Buy as many of the 500-gil items as you can afford, then earn more cash and buy more needles. You'll need at least 10 of them.

MYSTIC KEY COLLECTION

With the Mystic Key in hand, you'll be able to open doors that you had to pass up earlier in your journey, and collect items (listed below) that will aid you in the rest of your travels. All of the items are helpful, but the only one that you absolutely cannot afford to pass up is the Nitro Powder in Cornelia Castle.

WESTERN KEEP

Travel to the northeast corner of the keep, and move west then south. You'll find the treasure room southwest of Astos's chamber. The room bears a Falchion, a Power Staff and a pair of Steel Gloves.

MARSH CAVE

On the same level of the Marsh Cave where you found the crown, you can use the Mystic Key to find a Silver Armlet, an Antidote and 1,020 gil—that's quite a haul for a small detour.

CHAOS SHRINE

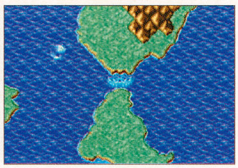
A pair of powerful swords lies hidden in the Chaos Shrine, behind doors that can be unlocked only with the Mystic Key. You'll find the Rune Blade in the shrine's southeast corner, and the Werebuster in the northeast corner.

CORNELIA CASTLE

Cornelia Castle's treasure rooms are side by side at the far end of the first floor. They hold several useful items, and one item that you can't do without: Nitro Powder. Take it to the Dwarves of Mt. Duergar.

08 MT. DUERGAR

Dock your ship northwest of Cornelia, then walk southwest to the Dwarf cave. Use the Mystic Key to enter a room just north of the entrance and collect two cash rewards, then head to the cave's southeast section. You'll find another room full of goodies; pyrotechnician Nerrick is also there. Give him the Nitro Powder and let him go to work on a new canal to the south.



09 MELMOND

Return to your ship, sail south, then go west through the canal and continue until you find Melmond. Rest at the inn then shop for spells. The Life spell is essential. Curaga and Healara will come in handy, too. The weapons and armor in town won't be new to you if you've been looting treasure chests dutifully.

10 CAVERN OF EARTH

The Cavern of Earth is on a peninsula shaped like a dragon's tail. Once you enter, travel east then south to a flight of stairs. Descend, cut across Floor B2 to the east, then go south again. Descend and work counterclockwise on B3 to reach the boss.

VAMPIRE

HP	ATK	ACC	DEF	AGI	INT	EVA	M. DEF	GIL	EXP	WEAKNESS
280	76	39	26	36	26	72	75	2,000	1,200	Fire, Dia

The Transylvanian terror is capable of tossing out strong spells, but he can't withstand a lot of damage and he's particularly vulnerable to fire spells. After hitting him with a level-5 Firaga spell, the rest of your fight will just be cleanup. The Vampire's Star Ruby will be your reward.

11 GIANT'S CAVE

Hand over the Star Ruby to the stone behemoth in Giant's Cave. He'll shuffle out of your way. Gather items from chests to the south, then head north to the stairs.

12 SAGE'S CAVE

Once outside, travel south to the end of the peninsula and enter the Sage's Cave. Sadda will fill you in on the evil that lurks deep in the Cavern of Earth, then give you the Earth Rod.

10 CAVERN OF EARTH

Return to the Vampire's chamber, advance to a stone barrier then use the Earth Rod to venture deeper into the cave.

LICH

HP	ATK	ACC	DEF	AGI	INT	EVA	M. DEF	GIL	EXP	WEAKNESS
1,200	40	49	40	12	30	24	120	3,000	2,200	Fire, Dia

Master magician Lich will conjure a wide array of spells to keep your adventurers at bay. Have your best swordsman wield the Rune Blade, and instruct your magic users to concentrate on Fire and Dia attacks. Your prize is illumination of the Earth Crystal.

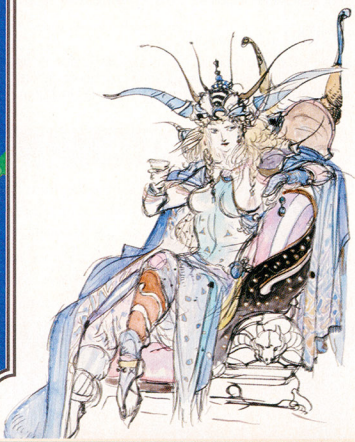
THREE LIGHTS TO GO

The demise of one of the four fiends opens the first Soul of Chaos cave, located in the Earthgift Shrine (south of Chaos Shrine). Don't go there until you're much stronger. For now, sail west and continue your quest to light the crystals.

FINAL FANTASY II

A year after the Japanese release of Final Fantasy, Square introduced Final Fantasy II to Famicom fans. Although it has many similarities to the original game, it also has big advancements, such as more-defined characters and a more complex leveling-up system. Fighters will rotate in and out of your party. They gain physical strength as they use weapons, and build spell-casting power as they use magic.

01 ALTAIR
02 GATREA
03 FYNN
04 PALOOM
05 POFT
06 SALAMAND
07 SEMMIT FALLS



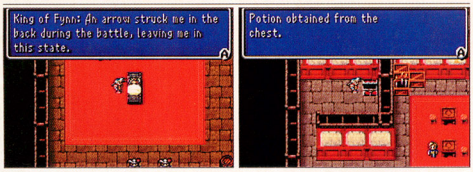
RISE OF AN EMPIRE

A period of peace has come to an explosive end with the rise to dominance of the emperor of Palamecia. Some of the citizens have attempted to fight the emperor's army, but they've been silenced quickly. Others have fled and live hidden in the shadows. After a brief battle, in which your party does not stand a chance, three of your fighters will wake up and regroup in Altair.

01 ALTAIR

Conversations with Hilda and the other citizens of Altair will fill you in on the conflict between the empire and the rebels, and on the game's word-memory system, which allows you to learn key words and ask characters about specific subjects. The system also enables you to trigger events by showing items to characters. When Hilda mentions the term Wild Rose, learn it from her, then ask her about it. Next, talk to Hilda's companion, Minwu, and ask him about Wild Rose. You'll pick up some helpful tips.

A FEW THINGS BEFORE YOU LEAVE



Following your conversation with Hilda and Minwu, step over to the king's chamber and hear his story. He doesn't always have a lot to say, but he can offer some interesting tidbits. After that, go to the rebel hideout's main chamber and collect a Potion from a treasure chest.

SHOP AND EQUIP

Most of the towns that you will visit in your travels have places where you can revive fallen team members, purchase items, armor and weapons, and rest up for another day of adventuring out in the field. If your party is beat up, seek out the closest municipality.

ITEMS

Shops across the kingdom tend to stock the same basic goods. If a shop has more than one seller, speak to each of the merchants to see their wares. As you move down the list of items for sale, you'll see a description of the currently selected item at the bottom of the screen. Stock up on Potions and Antidotes from the start.

ARMOR

When you highlight a piece of armor, you'll see symbols next to headshots of your party members. A green arrow pointing up indicates that the item will aid the character. A red arrow pointing down shows that the character's current equipment is better. An equal sign means that the character is equipped with the selected item. After you purchase armor, you can equip each item manually or outfit your characters with the best available armor automatically.

WEAPONS

The act of purchasing and equipping weapons is similar to that of armor. Arrows indicate whether the item will be beneficial to the character in question. The Optimal option will match the best available weapons with each fighter. All weapons except bows require only one hand to carry, allowing your characters to hold either two weapons each or a weapon and a shield. The nine weapons, listed below, have magic-casting powers. To use a weapon's special ability, select the Items entry from the battle command list, press A to switch to the item list, then press Up on the Control Pad to see the character's weapons. Choose a weapon, then press A twice to execute the attack.

WEAPONS

WEAPON	SPELL
Holly Lance	Holy: 8
Mage's Staff	Thunder: 5
Masamune	Haste: 11
Rune Axe	Fog: 6

WEAPONS	SPELL
Stardust Rod	Fire: 16
Thunder Spear	Thunder: 16
White Rose	Berserk: 16
Wizards Staff	Scourge: 16
Yoichi's Bow	Berserk: 3

SPELLS

Magic is divided into two categories: ally-aiding white magic and enemy-damaging black magic. Any character can earn spells of either variety by way of magic tomes, but if a character concentrates on one particular type of magic, he or she will gain strength in that discipline over time. A character can be equipped with a maximum of 16 spells at a given time. If you want to teach a new spell to a character who is already maxed out, you'll have to discard one of his current spells.

OVERWORLD ACTIVITY

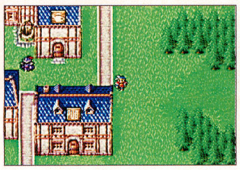
When your party leaves a town or dungeon, it will enter the overworld, where you'll travel to your next destination and engage in random battles—be sure to have your weapons and spells equipped. If you stray from the path between locations, your party may encounter enemies that it's not ready for. You'll fight those battles at some point down the line, but avoid them for now. When you win a battle, your party members will earn stats for the weapons and spells they used, and obtain gil and treasures. You will also add enemies to the bestiary.

02 GATREA

Venture north from Altair, then veer west and enter Gatrea. You'll find a few people to talk to in town, and a variety of places where you can spend your cash on new weapons, armor and spells. Stock up, then set off for Fynn.

03 FYNN

Fynn is crawling with imperial soldiers. Talk to no one, or you will find your team in a brutal fight. Head north through the town; just past the fence, travel east until you reach the outside corner of the town wall. Go south from there and enter the pub. Avoid the soldiers in the pub and head straight for the bartender. He'll give you a hard time for going behind the counter at first, but once you ask him about Wild Rose, he'll understand that you can be trusted. After a short conversation concerning a wounded rebel, the bartender will step aside, giving you access to the pub's back room.



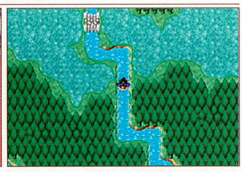
THE FALLEN SOLDIER AND THE RING

As was the case with the bartender, the rebel soldier will be gruff with you until you identify yourself as a friend by bringing up Wild Rose. After you utter the secret phrase, the soldier, Prince Scott, will open up to you, tell of his plight and give you his ring. You can use the ring in the overworld to see a detailed map of the world. Press B and Select to trigger it.

01 RETURN TO ALTAIR

With the ring in hand, set off for Altair and speak to Hilda, showing her Prince Scott's ring from the Items list. She will tell you that the rebels will be much better off after you discover the metal Mythril, which has magical properties. Learn the word, then repeat it to Hilda. She'll ask you to find Josef in Salamand with Minwu's help.

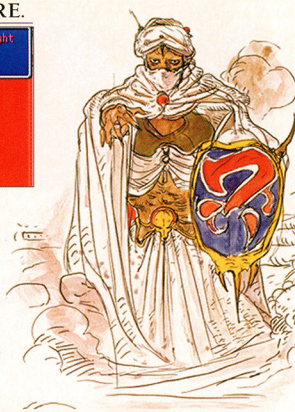
MINWU JOINS THE PARTY



After you've received your orders from Hilda, turn your attention to Minwu. The white-magic user will become a member of your party, give you use of his canoe and point you toward the port city of Paloom.

WAIT! THERE'S MORE.

The conversations continue. After Minwu joins you, speak to Hilda again to learn about the Dreadnought (another key word) that the empire is building in Bafsk. Ask her about the Dreadnought to learn the key word Airship. When you're through, go outside and talk to Prince Gordon and show him the ring, behind the rebel hideout.



04 PALOOM

Paloom is northeast of Altair. Travel north across the bridge, then step right into the lake. Your party will board Minwu's canoe automatically and start crossing the lake in style. As soon as you enter Paloom, a sailor will ask you if you want to pay for passage to Poft. You do, but first you will want to visit Paloom's shops and purchase a boatload of weapons, armor and items—all that you can afford. With your party fitted for battle, return to the sailor, pay him the fee and set off on your voyage.

05 POFT

You'll find airship pilot Cid in Poft's pub. Speak to him, then move on to his underling. The first mate will give you a list of possible destinations and a price for traveling to each one. Your next destination is Salamand. Pay the mate 200 gil, then leave the town. You'll find the airship waiting outside. If you prefer to walk to Salamand, you can—it's a little bit of a hike, but you'll earn valuable experience and pick up a good chunk of change along the way.

06 SALAMAND

The winter wonderland of Salamand sits on the edge of civilization. Once there, outfit your party with weapons, armor and magic and talk to the townspeople to learn of the empire's plans in the area. You'll find Josef in the town's northeast corner. Ask him about Mythril. He'll send you to Semmit Falls on a rescue mission.

07 SEMMIT FALLS

Journey due west from Salamand until you reach the water's edge. Drop your canoe into the water and follow the river for a short jog south, then east through a mountain pass. You'll find an opening in the rock wall north of the waterfall. That's the entrance to Semmit Falls. Not far into the cave, you'll discover a large blue rock. You won't be able to interact with the object until you return later with Josef.

FLOOR B1

A treasure chest in the northwest corner of the cave's first floor holds 200 gil. A chest in the southeast corner holds 400 gil. The passage to the next floor is in the southwest corner.

FLOOR B2

The water passage at the entrance to B2 leads to the center of the floor. From there, go to the northwest corner to collect Eye Drops, and to a chest directly north of center to retrieve a Potion. You'll find a Hi-Potion in the southeast corner and four doors in the northeast corner. The leftmost door leads to the next floor. If you open any of the other doors, you'll enter random enemy encounters in otherwise empty rooms. There will be plenty of time to fight later. Keep traveling deeper into the cave.

FLOOR B3

Move south from the entrance to floor B3 to find a chest that contains 200 gil. Travel to the center of the floor, then west across a bridge to find 250 gil in a chest. There are three doors in the northwest. Again, the leftmost door leads to the next area.

FLOOR B4

One of the captured slaves from Salamand is an old friend named Paul. He'll clue you in on the plight of the citizens of Salamand. After your discussion, Paul will escape with the other captives, leaving you to continue your exploration. The path to the next floor is in the southeast corner.

Battles make warriors weary. If your team is low on hit points and items at any place in your journey, use Minwu's Teleport spell to leave the cave, and take the opportunity to rest. When you return to the cave, you'll have everything you collected on your previous visit, but you'll start from the first floor.

FLOOR B5

Move north across a bridge to find a Fire Tome, then travel to the northeast corner and follow a narrow path to the southeast corner to reach the next floor.

FLOOR B6

Head west across the bridge, then north and east to find a Teleport Tome in the northeast corner of the final floor. Collect the book, as Minwu will not always be in your party. Once you've retrieved the tome, backtrack to where you started on the floor, then move north to the boss battle.

SERGEANT

HP	MP	ATK	ACC	DEF	EVA	M. DEF	GIL	WEAKNESS
420	10	35	2-70	25	1-30	3-50	150-300	None

Physical attacks are painfully weak against Sergeant, but offensive spells such as fire- and ice-based spells are quite effective. Have Minwu use the Protect spell to give the members of your party a defensive boost against Sergeant's attacks, then hit the enemy with every strong spell in your arsenal.

DREAD AND REBIRTH

You've only scratched the surface. Final Fantasy II is an epic of the first order, complete with perilous predicaments, plot twists and a harrowing trip aboard the enemy airship known as the Dreadnought. Three of your party members will stay with you throughout the story, but others will come and go. Some will even meet their end on your watch. After you finish the main adventure, you'll be able to reunite with the deceased characters for a bonus adventure in the afterlife: the Soul of Rebirth.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA® The Minish Cap

Livin' Large (or Small) In Hyrule

Hey, you! Up there! Squint if you have to. We've got huge news in this first look at The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap, the most ambitious title yet seen for the Game Boy Advance. Add it up: two worlds, one regular-sized, one wee-tiny. Two heads, always better than one. Four swords, more or less. One upstart supervillain. Hundreds of Hyruleans. Big stuff. Read on.

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Don't Quit your day job, Ganon

Link's new adventure reveals the origins of Link's Four Swords nemesis, Vaati. And he's an insane megalomaniac compared to Ganon, Link's enemy in other adventures.

Though Vaati has blown into town twice in the Four Swords series, which debuted as a multiplayer-only add-on to A Link to the Past on the GBA, Zelda fans know little about Link's latest nemesis. He's an inky one-eyed orb. He's a wind wizard who's obsessed with Princess Zelda. And he somehow falls into cahoots with Ganon, Link's other nemesis, as revealed in the finale of Four Swords Adventures on the GCN. It's about time we found out the origin of the bad guy who's lent the Zelda series a creepy new atmosphere, and The Minish Cap will expose all. Set early in the Four Swords mythology, The Minish Cap, developed by the same team at Capcom that created the series's debut, spins a new tale that draws in the usual suspects—Link, Zelda and the people of Hyrule—and a race of saviors who have been right under their noses.

The tiny Picori appeared from the sky, bringing the hero of men a sword and a golden light.

With wisdom and courage, the hero drove out the darkness.

When peace had been restored, the people enshrined that blade with care.

The Wind Waker did it with woodblock-print style, The Minish Cap does it with stained glass: medieval art is again used to tell the prologue, which reveals that a tiny race crafted super-weapons for Hyrule ages before The Minish Cap begins.

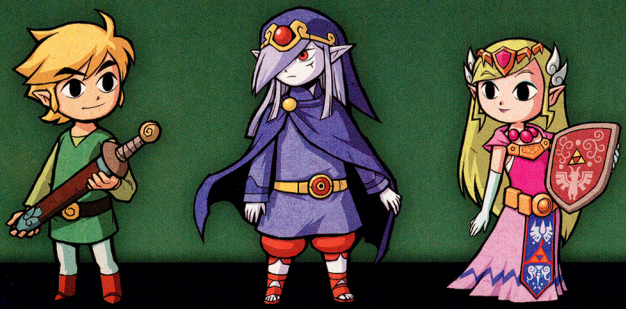
At the start of The Minish Cap, Link awakens at his house (the same one often seen, just south of Hyrule Castle), when Zelda comes calling for her longtime friend to accompany her to the annual Picori Festival. As Link, you'll strive to keep up with the princess as she runs to the town square, one of many overworld areas on a new Hyrule landscape. (You'll also revisit a few classic locales, such as Lake Hylia, though they're nothing like you remember them.) In town, you'll learn much about the miniscule Picori people from celebrating villagers who—since the Picori are said to appear only to good children—use the legends as a way to make kids behave themselves. Link is none the wiser, at least until an evil deed that occurs during the festival's swordfighting competition brings a new threat to Hyrule. Enter Vaati—in never-before-seen human form.

You'll notice that Link doesn't have his traditional green cap at the start of his adventure, when he and Zelda roam the festival grounds.

Though they miss the competition, Link and Zelda attend the award ceremony, in which the victor is allowed to touch Hyrule's sacred blade.

We already know Vaati as a villain, but Hyrule learns that lesson the hard way, as he breaks the sword—which doubles as a seal on a chest.

Vaati hopes to find a certain unnamed "force." Try as he might, he can't find it in the chest, so he turns Zelda to stone—because he fears the power of her lineage—and flees the scene.



The king explains that only the sword can break Zelda's curse, then sends Link to find the people who can repair the blade: the Picori, of course.

Big Heroes in Short Supply

Link is pure-hearted enough to see the Picori. But he'll need a billed sidekick to show him how to make it big in the little city—and little in the big city.

As the king's troops search for Vaati, Link heads to the last place the Picori were seen. There he finds naught but a bizarre hat-bird thing named Ezlo under attack by Octoroks. After Link does his heroic duty, Ezlo latches onto his head to hitch a ride. Fortunately, the creature knows where the Picori (real name: the Minish) live. He shrinks Link to visit them in Hyrule's other world, which opens up tiny-versus-giant gameplay that leads to incredibly inventive challenges new to the Legend of Zelda series.

It's a match made in haberdasher heaven, but Link doesn't see it at first, so Ezlo chases his new buddy down and hops on his head.

Ezlo soon carries his weight in the quest by helping Link shrink and grow when they reach "places of power" that the cap can tap into.

When you're in Minish Woods, you might pass Minish Village a million times without seeing the mushroom colony—or, worse yet, step on it.

You'll need to go teensy in Lake Hylia to visit the Temple of Droplets, where easy-peesy overworld foes like Octoroks are the boss of you.

Link's size also affects his social standing. He can chat with many animals only when bite-sized, which helps him see things in a new way.

The Lowdown on Ezlo

Fowl? Headgear? Two different things haven't collided with such crazy impact since you got your chocolate in my peanut butter.

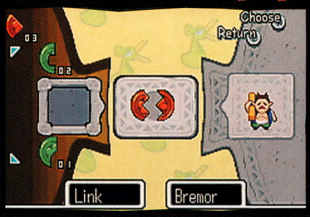
He's a bird; no, a cap. He's cranky; nope, hilarious. One thing's for sure: there's just something about Ezlo. When he yells, "You there! What's wrong with you! Do you like watching me take this abuse!?," you'll think twice about saving the cantankerous thingamajig. But the payoff is rich. Before meeting royalty from atop Link's head, Ezlo blathers, "Are you sure I look right? I never know what to wear to formal occasions." Neurotic? Comic? Whatever—Ezlo's the best sidekick in eons.

Kinstones and Social Mixers

Time to stretch your wings, social butterflies: you'll be glad-handing the king and a cast of hundreds, plus joining your Kinstones with theirs to bring change to Hyrule.

As you explore The Minish Cap's fresh take on dual-world design, you'll meet hundreds of characters across the overworld, and in every nook and cranny of the world underfoot. Townies, royals, Minish people, miners, ranchers, Cucco-tenders, carpenters—take a breath—ghosts, nut-spittin' Deku Scrubs, rock-smashing Gorons and many others fill Hyrule. There's never been more meeting and greeting in a handheld Zelda game. And with the new Kinstone system, there's never been a better reason to socialize.

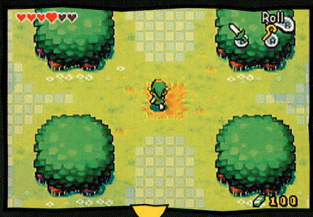
You'll find Kinstone shards during your travels. When the right shards are fitted together, the Kinstone will trigger a magical event. You'll first need to find someone who wants to fuse shards.

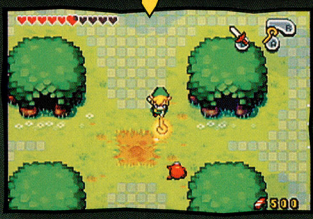


You'll then need to pick through your collection to see if you have any shards that join with your fusion partner's. If you have a match, you'll see one of many results, even if it happens far away.

You'll encounter only two vendors in the square at first, but a certain fusion will bring a new merchant and his powerful new wares to town.

Another kind of fusion summons a gold version of a common foe to a distant area. If you defeat it, you'll reap much more valuable spoils.





Still another fusion causes new portals to appear in Hyrule. They lead to places that hide secrets—such as dungeons hidden under bushes.

True Original

Looks like Link's getting power-crazed with the new Mole Mitts on hand.

The Minish Cap definitely delivers innovation, but how about all the other essentials that Zelda fans demand—cool weapons, awesome dungeons and brilliant bosses, for starters? It's all there. Next month, we'll continue digging into the deep epic. Until then, chew on this: if the game exposes how Vaati becomes the wind abomination seen in the Four Swords series, shouldn't Link make his first foray into four-hero gameplay at some point in The Minish Cap? If you're hungry for major revelations, stay tuned.

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2

DIDDY AND DIXIE CLAMBER THEIR WAY ONTO THE GBA FOR A POCKET-SIZED REVISITING OF A CLASSIC PLATFORMER.

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

©1995-2004 Nintendo. Game by Rare.

WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

Donkey Kong Country 2 debuted on the Super NES in 1995, and continued blazing the trail begun by its predecessor. It featured incredible, prerendered graphics, humorous character animations, creative level design and nail-biting boss battles. Now, almost a decade later, you can once again help boyfriend/girlfriend duo Diddy and Dixie rescue Donkey Kong from K. Rool's clutches in a handheld port of the original. The GBA version has loads of content and new minigames to boot.

NEW WAY'S TO MONKEY AROUND

Quadruple your fun with four new minigames, unlocked and rarin' to go from the start. Diddy's Dash and Bag a Bug are timed single-player challenges. Expresso's Racing and Funky's Flights can be enjoyed solo, or with friends via the GBA Game Link cable.

Diddy's Dash

Rip through each level as fast as you can in timed DK Attack mode.

Expresso's Racing

Break from the pack and run your ostrich to victory against CPU or human opponents.

Funky's Flights

Glide your Gyrocopter through dangerous terrian or duke it out against up to four friends.

Bag a Bug

Grab the most bugs in 60 seconds and top the charts. Avoid Klubba—he'll swipe your critter collection.

A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS

Diddy's posse is in full effect, ready to throw down when the action heats up. Each one of his buds has special abilities that can make your journey a more pleasant, punk-busting experience. You can even fight some boss battles as one of the creatures, so familiarize yourself with their talents.

Rambi

Plow through hordes on Rambi's back. Not only can he dispatch foes with a nudge of his horn, but he can blast through obstacles like bulldozer.

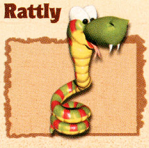
Enguarde

Use Enguarde's pointed proboscis to dispose of enemies and pave new pathways.

Squawks

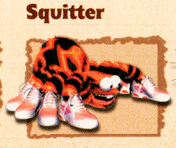
Take to the skies with Squawks. Fire eggs from his beak to clear the playing field.

Rattly



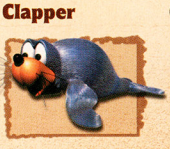
You can reach great heights with Rattly's super jump.

Squitter



Squitter's web blasts ensnare wily foes and can build temporary climbable platforms.

Clapper



Pat Clapper on the back to chill or freeze steamy bodies of water.

Glimmer

Glimmer's ray of light cuts through the murky darkness during select aquatic missions.

K. ROOL'S CADRE

Kaptain K. Rool will command his minions to thwart your rescue mission. Study their attack patterns and exploit their weaknesses—Donkey Kong is depending on you.

CRATE AND BARREL

There is a handful of powerful foes that you must defeat from a distance. Scour the environment for crates, barrels—even tossable enemies—and hurl your way to victory from afar.

Kruncha

Zinger

Kloak

SEAFOOD SKEWER

Stab seafaring enemies with Enguarde's swordlike beak. Flotsam swim in predictable horizontal patterns, but baddies like Lockjaw and Shuri are more difficult to dodge. Watch their movements and react accordingly.

Flotsam

Lockjaw

Shuri

APE AIRLINES

Some enemies prove useful, provided you can harness them. Take note of the location of certain bad guys. You can often bounce to greater heights off their backs, or use them against their allies.

Klobber & Kaboom

Barrel-clad reptiles will knock you about until you stomp their lids. Toss them at their shipmates.

Flitter

Think of Flitter as a floating step; bounce off its back to collect elusive items and reach new areas.

Krocheads

Launch from the heads of reptillian springboards before they dip below the surface.

JUMP AROUND

The vast majority of K. Rool's crew can be toppled with a simple jump or spin attack. Cartwheel, helicopter-spin or pounce on them and silence their evil ways.

Klomp

Neek

Click-Clack

Klinger

Kaboing

Klampon

Kannon

Kutlass

Krook

Necky

Puftup

When it senses danger, Puftup will inflate and eventually burst. Avoid the darts that shoot from its carcass.

Spiny

Avoid jumping on Spiny's quills. Instead, use Diddy's cartwheel move or toss an object at the prickly beast to neutralize it.

Cat-O'-9-Tails

This crazy feline will throw you in the air. Direct your trajectory with the Control Pad to make the most of your free flight.

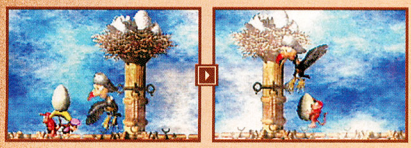
WHOOPING SOME BOSS TAIL

You'll fight some wily bosses on your quest to thrash K. Rool's keister. Each miscreant you encounter will dish out attacks with panache. Use the following tips to put them in their place.

BOSS 1: KROW'S NEST

Gangplank Galleon's final battle pits you against a giant bird. You'll have to contend with projectile eggs and swooping assaults from your enemy. Your first encounter is by far the easier of the two against Krow.

How Do You Like Your Eggs? Scrambled?



Dodge Krow's eggs, then hurl them back at their parent. After you score several successful hits, Krow will finally alter its flight paths. Stomp on bouncing eggs and repeat your assault.

BOSS 2: KLEEVER'S KILN

This won't be the last time you encounter Kleever. In the first bout, you must lob cannonballs at the blade repeatedly while avoiding a close shave. Make haste to the opposite side of the lava pit and continue on the offensive.

Bright Lava, Big Blade

Throw the cannonball at Kleever. When the hooks lower, race to the other side and repeat.

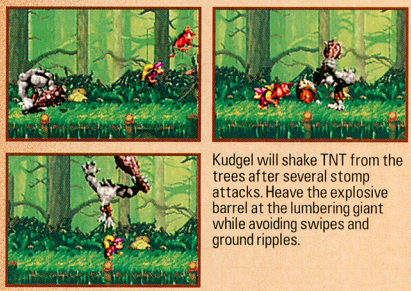
Swing High, Sweet Champion

Kleever will change his attack later in the fight. Use Dixie's helicopter move to hasten your escape.

BOSS 3: KUDGEL'S KONTEST

Like its name implies, Kudgel walks loudly and carries a *huge* stick. Jump just before Kudgel makes impact, or the resulting shockwave will stun your monkey. Keep your distance and watch for melee attacks.

Jump Kudgel's Quakes



Kudgel will shake TNT from the trees after several stomp attacks. Heave the explosive barrel at the lumbering giant while avoiding swipes and ground ripples.

BOSS 4: KING ZING STING

Touching King Zing Sting will result in instant damage, so keep your distance. You'll take the form of Squawks during the fight; pelt the king's stinger with your eggs (it's easier from behind) and elude its attacks. Squash Sting's attendants during the final stage.

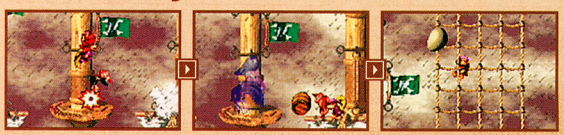
Sting Operation

Every two hits, the king will fire stingers. Find a safe spot to avoid injury.

BOSS 5: KREEPY KROW

Krow's come back to haunt you like last night's chili surprise. This time, you'll fight the ethereal bird and some spooky underlings in a difficult battle high atop a ship. Pounce on or dodge the ghostly Neckys that dive-bomb your character. Target the solid, corporeal buzzard—doing so will release a barrel that you can throw at Krow.

Round Two . . . Fight!



Attack the living Necky, then lob the barrel at Krow. A successful hit will lower a series of hooks that lead to a rope ladder. Climb to the next level while sidestepping eggs, then hit Krow. Repeat the process while avoiding the eggs that are coming from every angle.

BOSS 6: STRONGHOLD SHOWDOWN

Unique to this version of Donkey Kong Country 2 is the Mighty Kerozene boss fight. In the Super NES original, a quick cinematic concluded the chapter. Now 21st-century gamers can rewrite history in an epic battle versus a fire-breathing megasaur with gigantic, clublike hands. Look alive, 'cause things are about to heat up.

Kleevers Return

In the first round against Kerozene, toss cannonballs at the flying Kleevers.

Barbecued Ape

Keep to the sidelines or risk an instant barbecuing. Throw the cannonball at Kerozene's mighty head—after two hits, he'll slam his fists down. Jump to escape the quake.

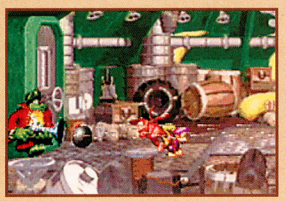
Ham Hands

Kerozene's final attack sets the ground ablaze. Jump onto the boss's huge hands for safety.

BOSS 7: K. ROOL DUEL

You've made it to the final battle—or so you think. It's time to stomp lizard gizzard in your showdown with Kaptain K. Rool. The mad reptile's packing serious heat—a multifunctional blunderbuss that shoots everything but the kitchen sink.

Return to Sender

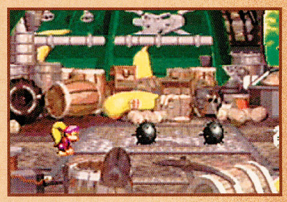


Launch stagnant cannonballs at K. Rool's gun when the vacuum is on; they'll jam the firing mechanism and cause it to explode.

Leapin' Lizards

Leap over the captain's rush and avoid the spiked cannonballs. Eventually, one will lose its spikes; pick it up and send it home.

High and Low



K. Rool will fire salvos of spiked munitions. Jump or duck to avoid them. Pounce on the flying barrel, then throw it back.

BOSS 8: KROCODILE KORE

K. Rool's back for an encore performance. (What is it with bosses who won't take a hint?) Recall the techniques you employed in your last fight and give the green pirate a double dose of simian justice. Pay special attention to the new ammunition he fires—one misstep could end it all.

The Iceman Cometh

K. Rool's relentless attacks will have you jumping and ducking through most of the fight. Evade the waves of colored clouds and spiked cannonballs that soar your way. Stomp on the barrels to release the cannonballs hidden inside. Use the technique diligently to win.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Donkey Kong Country 2 is the latest yesteryear classic to swing its way onto the Game Boy Advance. Once you've squashed K. Rool's banana-theft plot, you've still got plenty of challenges ahead. Call up your buddies and hook up your GBAs; it's time to tackle some minigames.

Pokécenter

We're bursting at the seams with news this month—Pokémon comes to the DS, Team Rocket storms the Pokémon TCG and one Trainer schools the Orre Colosseum crew.

POKéMON DASHES ONTO THE DS

Mad-dash games are a welcome change from traditional racers, always full of tripya-up obstacles. Pokémon Dash, in the works for future release, will bring the rare racing style to the Nintendo DS. You'll run Pokémon through a sprawling course, getting a bird's-eye view of the action on the upper screen while using touch control on the lower screen to push your racer forward. You'll need to go airborne with balloon power to hop over seas to the next checkpoint—and then pop the balloons to plummet back down. Stay tuned for more information on what's shaping up to be a thrilling ride.

TEAM ROCKET HITS TCG

Team Rocket kicked off its TCG invasion earlier this month with Pokémon TCG: EX Team Rocket Returns. Now that we've gotten our hands on the amazing cards below, we can see why so many Trainers are joining Team Rocket's ranks. Their cards are designed to cripple a challenger's team.

When Dark Ampharos is one of your Active Pokémon, once per turn its Poké-Body ability—Darkest Impulse—will allow you to add two damage counters to an Evolution card that your opponent plays.

Dark Raticate's Dark Seed attack is as useful as it is devious. It prevents the Defending Pokémon from retreating for one turn, and adds five damage counters to it at the end of your opponent's next turn.

Pokémon TRADING CARD GAME WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2004

In commemoration of this year's Pokémon TCG World Championships, you can own the winners' decks. The four 60-card World Championships 2004 decks reveal the best Pokémon TCG strategies in the world. Start training for next year's tournament now!

Each World Championships 2004 card is a special-edition version of a preexisting card. It bears the tournament's logo, and a World Championship Trainer's autograph.

#252 Treecko
#253 Grovyle
#254 Sceptile
#255 Torchic
#256 Combusken
#257 Blaziken
#258 Mudkip
#259 Marshtomp
#260 Swampert
#261 Poochyena
#262 Mightyena
#263 Zigzagoon
#264 Linoone
#265 Wurmple
#266 Silcoon
#267 Beautifly
#268 Cascoon
#269 Dustox
#270 Lotad
#271 Lombre
#272 Ludicolo
#273 Seedot
#274 Nuzleaf
#275 Shiftry
#276 Taillow
#277 Swellow
#278 Wingull
#279 Pelipper
#280 Ralts
#281 Kirlia
#282 Gardevoir
#283 Surskit
#284 Masquerain
#285 Shroomish
#286 Breloom
#287 Slakoth
#288 Vigoroth
#289 Slaking
#290 Nincada
#291 Ninjask
#292 Shedinja
#293 Whismur
#294 Loudred
#295 Exploud
#296 Makuhita
#297 Hariyama
#298 Azurill
#299 Nosepass
#300 Skitty
#301 Delcatty
#302 Sableye
#303 Mawile
#304 Aron
#305 Lairon
#306 Aggron
#307 Meditite
#308 Medicham
#309 Electrike
#310 Manectric
#311 Plusle
#312 Minun
#313 Volbeat
#314 Illumise
#315 Roselia
#316 Gulpin
#317 Swalot
#318 Carvanha
#319 Sharpedo
#320 Wailmer
#321 Wailord
#322 Numel
#323 Camerupt
#324 Torkoal
#325 Spoink
#326 Grumpig
#327 Spinda
#328 Trapinch
#329 Vibrava
#330 Flygon
#331 Cacnea
#332 Cacturne
#333 Swablu
#334 Altaria
#335 Zangoose
#336 Seviper
#337 Lunatone
#338 Solrock
#339 Barboach
#340 Whiscash
#341 Corphish
#342 Crawdaunt
#343 Baltoy
#344 Claydol
#345 Lileep
#346 Cradily
#347 Anorith
#348 Armaldo
#349 Feebas
#350 Milotic
#351 Castform
#352 Kecleon
#353 Shuppet
#354 Banette
#355 Duskull
#356 Dusclops
#357 Tropius
#358 Chimecho
#359 Absol
#361 Snorunt
#362 Glalie
#360 Wynaut
#363 Spheal
#364 Sealeo
#365 Walrein
#366 Clamperl
#367 Huntail
#368 Gorebyss
#369 Relicanth
#370 Luvdisc
#371 Bagon
#372 Shelgon
#373 Salamence
#374 Beldum
#375 Metang
#376 Metagross
#377 Regirock
#378 Regice
#379 Registeel
#380 Latias
#381 Latios
#382 Kyogre
#383 Groudon
#384 Rayquaza
#385 Jirachi*
Pokémon
CONNECT & COLLECT!
Normal Form
#386 Deoxys*
Attack Form
Defense Form
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Pokémon FIRERED VERSION + Pokémon LEAFGREEN VERSION + Pokémon RUBY VERSION + Pokémon SAPPHIRE VERSION + Pokémon COLOSSEUM
*Available only via special method.
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#001 Bulbasaur
#002 Ivysaur
#003 Venusaur
#004 Charmander
#005 Charmeleon
#006 Charizard
#007 Squirtle
#008 Wartortle
#009 Blastoise
#010 Caterpie
#011 Metapod
#012 Butterfree
#013 Weedle
#014 Kakuna
#015 Beedrill
#016 Pidgey
#017 Pidgeotto
#018 Pidgeot
#019 Rattata
#020 Raticate
#021 Spearow
#022 Fearow
#023 Ekans
#024 Arbok
#025 Pikachu
#026 Raichu
#027 Sandshrew
#028 Sandslash
#029 Nidoran♀
#030 Nidorina
#031 Nidoqueen
#032 Nidoran♂
#033 Nidorino
#034 Nidoking
#035 Clefairy
#036 Clefable
#037 Vulpix
#038 Ninetales
#039 Jigglypuff
#040 Wigglytuff
#041 Zubat
#042 Golbat
#043 Oddish
#044 Gloom
#045 Vileplume
#046 Paras
#047 Parasect
#048 Venonat
#049 Venomoth
#050 Diglett
#051 Dugtrio
#052 Meowth
#053 Persian
#054 Psyduck
#055 Golduck
#056 Mankey
#057 Primeape
#058 Growlithe
#059 Arcanine
#060 Poliwag
#061 Poliwhirl
#062 Poliwrath
#063 Abra
#064 Kadabra
#065 Alakazam
#066 Machop
#067 Machoke
#068 Machamp
#069 Bellsprout
#070 Weepinbell
#071 Victreebel
#072 Tentacool
#073 Tentacruel
#074 Geodude
#075 Graveler
#076 Golem
#077 Ponyta
#078 Rapidash
#079 Slowpoke
#080 Slowbro
#081 Magnemite
#082 Magneton
#083 Farfetch'd
#084 Doduo
#085 Dodrio
#086 Seel
#087 Dewgong
#088 Grimer
#089 Muk
#090 Shellder
#091 Cloyster
#092 Gastly
#093 Haunter
#094 Gengar
#095 Onix
#096 Drowzee
#097 Hypno
#098 Krabby
#099 Kingler
#100 Voltorb
#101 Electrode
#102 Exeggcute
#103 Exeggutor
#104 Cubone
#105 Marowak
#106 Hitmonlee
#107 Hitmonchan
#108 Lickitung
#109 Koffing
#110 Weezing
#111 Rhyhorn
#112 Rhydon
#113 Chansey
#114 Tangela
#115 Kangaskhan
#116 Horsea
#117 Seadra
#118 Goldeen
#119 Seaking
#120 Staryu
#121 Starmie
#122 Mr. Mime
#123 Scyther
#124 Jynx
#125 Electabuzz
#126 Magmar
#127 Pinsir
#128 Tauros
#129 Magikarp
#130 Gyarados
#131 Lapras
#132 Ditto
#133 Eevee
#134 Vaporeon
#135 Jolteon
#136 Flareon
#137 Porygon
#138 Omanyte
#139 Omastar
#140 Kabuto
#141 Kabutops
#142 Aerodactyl
#143 Snorlax
#144 Articuno
#145 Zapdos
#146 Moltres
#147 Dratini
#148 Dragonair
#149 Dragonite
#150 Mewtwo
#151 Mew*
#152 Chikorita
#153 Bayleef
#154 Meganium
#155 Cyndaquil
#156 Quilava
#157 Typhlosion
#158 Totodile
#159 Croconaw
#160 Feraligatr
#161 Sentret
#162 Furret
#163 Hoothoot
#164 Noctowl
#165 Ledyba
#166 Ledian
#167 Spinarak
#168 Ariados
#169 Crobat
#170 Chinchou
#171 Lanturn
#172 Pichu
#173 Cleffa
#174 Igglybuff
#175 Togepi
#176 Togetic
#177 Natu
#178 Xatu
#179 Mareep
#180 Flaaffy
#181 Ampharos
#182 Bellossom
#183 Marill
#184 Azumarill
#185 Sudowoodo
#186 Politoed
#187 Hoppip
#188 Skiploom
#189 Jumpluff
#190 Aipom
#191 Sunkern
#192 Sunflora
#193 Yanma
#194 Wooper
#195 Quagsire
#196 Espeon
#197 Umbreon
#198 Murkrow
#199 Slowking
#200 Misdreavus
#201 Unown
#202 Wobbuffet
#203 Girafarig
#204 Pineco
#205 Forretress
#206 Dunsparce
#207 Gligar
#208 Steelix
#209 Snubbull
#210 Granbull
#211 Qwilfish
#212 Scizor
#213 Shuckle
#214 Heracross
#215 Sneasel
#216 Teddiursa
#217 Ursaring
#218 Slugma
#219 Magcargo
#220 Swinub
#221 Piloswine
#222 Corsola
#223 Remoraid
#224 Octillery
#225 Delibird
#226 Mantine
#227 Skarmory
#228 Houndour
#229 Houndoom
#230 Kingdra
#231 Phanpy
#232 Donphan
#233 Porygon2
#234 Stantler
#235 Smeargle
#236 Tyrogue
#237 Hitmontop
#238 Smoochum
#239 Elekid
#240 Magby
#241 Miltank
#242 Blissey
#243 Raikou
#244 Entei
#245 Suicune
#246 Larvitar
#247 Pupitar
#248 Tyranitar
#249 Lugia*
#250 Ho-Oh
#251 Celebi*
Pokémon
FireRed Version
LeafGreen Version
E
EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Pokémon FireRed Version + Pokémon LeafGreen Version + Pokémon Ruby Version + Pokémon Sapphire Version + Pokémon Colosseum
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Orre Colosseum

Level 50: Double Battle

Orre Colosseum hosts Pokémon Colosseum's final and most-challenging level-50 double battle. We pitted many promising teams against the Orre Colosseum Trainers, but one by one they fell—only a single team remained. Leonard M. from Nevada built a Pokémon team that boasts amazing speed and power. It was a tough climb through the Orre Colosseum ranks, but his crew prevailed like no other we had seen. His team's battle against finalist Tardel was nothing short of monumental—check out the play-by-play action!

TRAINER LEONARD'S POKéMON

CROBAT LEVEL 50
Type: Poison-Flying
Ability: Inner Focus
Held Item: Focus Band
Moves:
Aerial Ace · Sludge Bomb
Shadow Ball · Snatch

SLAKING LEVEL 50
Type: Normal
Ability: Truant
Held Item: Choice Band
Moves:
Brick Break · Return
Earthquake · Shadow Ball

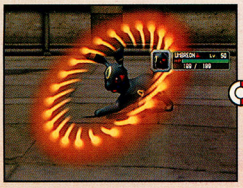
ALAKAZAM LEVEL 50
Type: Psychic
Ability: Inner Focus
Held Item: Scope Lens
Moves:
Fire Punch · Psychic
Ice Punch · Thunderpunch

HARIYAMA LEVEL 50
Type: Fighting
Ability: Thick Fat
Held Item: Quick Claw
Moves:
Belly Drum · Detect
Brick Break · Fake Out

WEEZING LEVEL 50
Type: Poison
Ability: Levitate
Held Item: Leftovers
Moves:
Fire Blast · Sludge Bomb
Haze · Will-O-Wisp

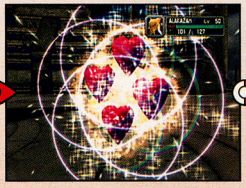
MILOTIC LEVEL 50
Type: Water
Ability: Marvel Scale
Held Item: Cheri Berry
Moves:
Ice Beam · Recover
Mirror Coat · Waterfall

LET THE FIGHT BEGIN!



Tardel opened the battle with Alakazam and Umbreon—we summoned Alakazam and Slaking. Umbreon used Helping Hand . . .

. . .which raised the power of its partner's next attack. Alakazam blasted Slaking with Psychic, but Slaking's high HP and Defense kept it standing.



It was our turn to attack—Alakazam hit Umbreon with Thunderpunch, and Slaking dealt a one-hit KO to the opposing Alakazam with Return.

Tardel called upon Breloom next; we swapped out our injured Slaking for Hariyama. Breloom fell fast to our Alakazam's Psychic attack.

Tardel brought out Metagross to replace Breloom—the Steel-and-Psychic-type Pokémon is tough as nails. We had to act fast.

We knew that speed was essential to our success. Umbreon used Helping Hand on Metagross, but we got Fire Punch off before it could strike.

Metagross retaliated by hitting our Alakazam with a super effective Shadow Ball attack. The Ghost-type move took out Alakazam in one hit.

Alakazam knocked off one third of Metagross's life—it was up to Hariyama to finish the job. We struck Metagross with Brick Break . . .

. . .but the Steel-and-Psychic-type still had one quarter of its life left after our attack. We were at its mercy—it dropped Hariyama with Psychic.

We brought out our remaining Pokémon—Milotic and our badly injured Slaking—and used Waterfall to finish off Metagross.

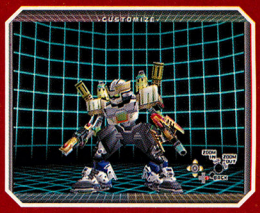
Two to one—it was still anyone's battle. We pummeled Umbreon with Brick Break and Waterfall, but it managed to use Confuse Ray on Slaking.

In a stroke of luck, Slaking overcame its confusion and dealt the final Brick Break blow to Tardel's pesky Umbreon. Take *that*, Tardel!

The Verdict

All of the Pokémon on Leonard's team boast extremely high Speed, Attack or Special Attack. Our victory relied very heavily on being able to strike first and to deal one-hit KOs. Only a fast, hard-hitting and well-balanced team can stand toe-to-toe with Tardel and win. Leonard's team fit the bill perfectly—great job!

CUSTOM ROBO™



The Results Are in!

The Robo Rumble Contest was fierce, but we've finally selected our 16 winners! We'd like to thank the hundreds of Custom Robo fans who made this contest a huge success. You submitted many solid strategies and impressive robos, but the ones who won first and second places stood above the rest in originality and pro-commander tactics. We're showcasing all 16 winning robos, and excerpts from the first- and second-place winners' strategies for all to see. Congratulations, everyone!

1st-Place Winner

Prize:
A Custom Robo Model of His Winning Robo

"[I] run behind obstacles, leaving my Caboose T pods behind, [and] fire bombs over walls or into the open and slide-shoot my enemy. Even while in the open, [I] use my Formula legs to accentuate the fastest robo in the game; I can run at an angle toward the opponent and dodge even Gatling-gun fire. Under heavy fire, [I] use my speed and can dodge any ammo. My pods draw my opponent toward me if they get too close, only to be [blasted] by my Magnum. After an assault, I retreat [and] leave two pods and a Wall Bomb. Then, when the time is right, I attack Magnum style—I even shoot 'em twice while they're down, perform the [aforementioned strategy], and repeat! I can also drift around gunfire while airborne to engage in close-range assault."

Commander:	**Jeffrey "Beast" C., California**
Body:	**Peregrine (original color)**
Gun:	**Magnum**
Bombs:	**Wall**
Pod:	**Caboose T**
Legs:	**Formula**
Allegiance:	**Steel Hearts**
Taunt:	**"I am a beast that will not be tamed!"**

"I am a beast that will not be tamed!"
—Jeffrey "Beast" C., CA

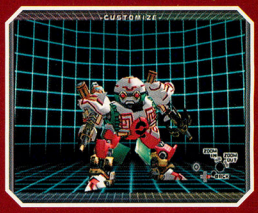
PEREGRINE

Don't Let His Size Fool You!

Jeffrey's one-of-a-kind Custom Robo model will resemble this stocky Peregrine when it's finished.

2nd-Place Winner

Prize: An Autographed Custom Robo Poster



"Little Raiders necessitate an aggressive, offensive strategy and the Flame [gun] is well-suited [to] the job. Slide shots are especially effective with the synergetic effect of Shrike's speed and the Flame's wide range. I try to run up close to the opponent to score a quick down with the powerful gun. Additionally, the Flame will hit the opponent upward, which is a nice setup for the Shrike's ram. The Caboose C complements this model well because [it] can be fired off as I retreat. The Tomahawk are convenient for the short Shrike. [I] can fire [them] over walls while hiding behind them. The Ground legs allow me to dodge fire as it rushes the opponent for an attack."

Commander:	**Bryce W., California**	**Pod:**	**Caboose C**
Body:	**Shrike (yellow)**	**Legs:**	**Ground**
Gun:	**Flame**	**Allegiance:**	**—**
Bombs:	**Tomahawk G**	**Taunt:**	**—**

3rd-Place Winners

Prize: A Groovy Custom Robo T-Shirt

Commander	Body	Gun	Bombs	Pod	Legs	Allegiance	Taunt
Andrew B., Pennsylvania	Ray 01 (blue)	3-Way	Straight S	Wall	High Jump	Z Syndicate	"You will be defeated. Resistance is futile."
Andrew H., California	Splendor (red)	Waxing Arc (!)	Submarine D	Speed P	High Jump	—	—
Dan M., New York	Seal Head (blue)	Wyrm (!)	Geo Trap	Satellite	Wide Jump	Steel Hearts	—
David H., California	Glaive (original)	Needle	Titan	Penumbra III (!)	Booster	—	—
Dominic Z., California	Halberd (yellow)	Wyrm (!)	Titan	Diving	Long Thrust	Steel Hearts	"I am king of the dome!"
Eddie B., New York	Halberd (original)	Shotgun	Wall	Dolphin G	Raven (!)	Steel Hearts	"Now you see me . . . now you're done!"
Jeremy B., Virginia	Ray 01 (original)	Crystal Strike (!)	Geo Trap	Diving	Formula	Steel Hearts	"And Steel Hearts destroy another foolish commander who thinks they are worthy of beating us."
Jessica C., Texas	Breaker (yellow)	Wyrm (!)	Crescent P	Cockroach G	Quick Jump	—	"I can fight just as good as the guys!"
Kurt H., Colorado	Halberd (original)	Gatling	Tomahawk B	Cockroach G	High Jump	Steel Hearts	"Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide—Halberd is everywhere."
Lance R., Texas	Rahu III (!) (original)	Halo	Wall	Spider G	Quick Jump	—	"A mind is a powerful thing—looks like you got the short end of the stick."
Ross Maxwell G., Nevada	Milky Way (original)	Crystal Strike (!)	Freeze	Spider G	Booster	Steel Hearts	"Can you get close enough to catch or hit me? Or are you gonna . . . freeze up?"
Steven H., California	Javelin (original)	Stun	Double Mine	Caboose X	Long Thrust	—	—
Tyler C., Pennsylvania	Ray Warrior (!) (original)	Dragon	Double Mine	Ground Freeze	Feather	Z Syndicate	"If you thought that Rahu was hard, then wait until you're struggling against me, begging for mercy!!!"
Yazdel F., Florida	Swift (original)	Wyrm (!)	Burrow P	Umbrella	Ground	—	"Catch you on the flip side."

NOW PLAYING

POWER GUIDE TO THE LATEST RELEASES JANUARY 2005

★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GREAT ★★★ GOOD ★★ SO-SO ★ POOR

METROID PRIME 2 ECHOES

Echoes plays off of its predecessor's strengths and explores new dark territory.

Nintendo's Metroid adventures have always been airtight in the way they present intricate navigation-oriented puzzles and in their creative use of items as both weapons and tools. While most first-person action titles concentrate on stealth and fighting, Metroid Prime games challenge you to be clever in the way that you traverse their alien worlds. Samus Aran's Scan Visor gives you information about key parts of the environment, and a rotating 3-D map points out how areas connect. The puzzles in Echoes are even more polished than those of the first Metroid Prime title, requiring resourceful use of Samus's Morph Ball form and the famous Screw Attack. The game offers up more beams than before and more environmental elements, such as the adventurer-flinging Kinetic Orb Cannons.

Supported by detailed graphics and vibrant lighting effects, the story concerns Samus's journeys between the Dark and Light Worlds and her run-ins with the mysterious Ing. The battles are as demanding as ever, and many of them require puzzle-solving prowess to ensure your survival.

The fighting system is front and center in multiplayer battles. Up to four players compete in death matches and in coin-collecting Bounty Hunter trials—both great additions to a groundbreaking series.

COMMENTS: Alan—This is a much fuller, richer game than Metroid Prime. That, combined with amazing level design, overcomes the sense of déjà vu that permeates the title. Steven—What gripped me about MP2 was the Dark World—a drowning, claustrophobic experience that makes you feel like you've walked through death's door. Scott—The best story and graphics of any Metroid game to date. Dark Samus is the supernemesis fans have been waiting for.

- Nintendo 3
- 1 to 4 players simultaneously

ALAN	★★★★★
CHRIS	★★★★½
GEORGE	★★★★★
SCOTT	★★★★★
STEVEN	★★★★★

TEEN T — Animated Blood Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

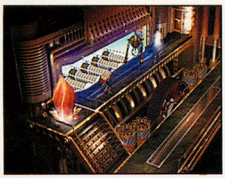
BATEN KAITOS: ETERNAL WINGS AND THE LOST OCEAN

Namco plays the epic card and introduces a lush RPG that's sure to please.

Namco's Tales of Symphonia has made RPG fans loopy this year with its great story and gameplay, and the publisher's Baten Kaitos will deliver the knockout blow. Brimming with beautiful scenes and a story worthy of an anime classic, the game is a lush and dramatic offering that will send you into role-playing heaven. Too many of the villagers have too much to say, and the voice samples have a distracting hollow sound, but the overall production value is among the highest of any recent GCN release.

The basis for the battle and item-management systems is a Magnus card interface; the cards hold the essence of objects. To attack an enemy, you play sword and spell cards, and to defend yourself, you play shield and armor cards. It may sound awkward, but in the game, it's a natural, free-flowing system that takes no time at all to learn. As you advance, you discover the importance of playing cards in combination and waiting for certain cards to mature (banana cards begin as harmful green items, then turn into life-replenishing yellow items).

More traditional RPG than card game, Baten Kaitos is the next great title on a console that is earning a reputation as the host for engaging epics.



COMMENTS: **Jessica**—Words can't even begin to describe how much I love this game. **Alan**—Making a strong case for my game of the year, BK's biggest strength is an amazing battle engine. **Chris**—The card battle system is boring and uninventive, and the game progresses far too slowly at the beginning. **Steven**—For the first hour, I didn't think BK lived up to the hype; it seemed too by-the-book. Five hours in, I realized that I was a fool. Like the combat cards themselves, the game's characters, art style and battle system change, throwing you one curve ball after another.

- Namco
- 1 player
- 2 discs

8

ALAN
CHRIS
GEORGE
JESSICA
STEVEN

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

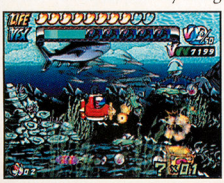
Blood
Fantasy Violence
Mild Language

VIEWTIFUL JOE 2

Plot twists and new powers make Joe's journey more viewtiful than ever.

After turning the action genre on its head last year with the GCN-exclusive Viewtiful Joe, Capcom is sure to attract even more fans with the franchise's second outing. Viewtiful Joe 2 has the same basic play style as its predecessor—side-view platforming with lots of punching, kicking and jumping—but it has some great additions, too. Joining Joe from the start is his girl, Silvia. You control the characters one at a time, and switch between them when the situation calls for one or the other's abilities. Joe's a brawler who learns slow motion and mach speed VFX Powers. Silvia has a laser gun and, in addition to slow motion power, she learns an all-new trick called Replay that triples her actions. All of the moves are heavily integrated into boss battles and puzzles. The game's energy—especially in difficult sequences—is so intense, you're sure to break into a sweat.

The film-parodying plot concerns an alien who has captured the power of happy endings, contained in seven Rainbow Oscar statuettes. Joe and Silvia must fight through movie-themed worlds to retrieve the statuettes and save the day. The environments are consistently stunning, and the overall graphic look has to be seen to be appreciated. It's a truly spectacular play.



COMMENTS: **Jessica**—I thoroughly enjoy being able to access both Joe and Sylvia and customize their special skills. **Steven**—What pushes VJ2 over the top, and again into perfect-score territory, isn't its tag-team dynamic but rather its even edgier sense of humor (Joe falls into women's restrooms, Silvia shakes her can to do megadamage). And the added 36 Chambers of Viewtiful mode give VJ veterans wonderfully tough challenges to chew on.

- Capcom
- 1 player

17

CHRIS
GEORGE
JESSICA
STEVE
STEVEN

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Cartoon Violence

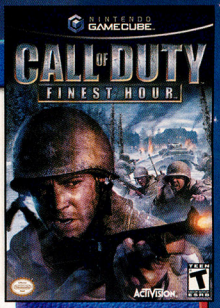
CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR

Soldier stories and a strong gameplay mix make Finest Hour a fine FPS.

Explosions rock the trench that you've jumped into for cover. Dust flies, smoke plumes rise and the intensity of World War II hits you like a mortar shell. Having established a firm foothold with PC gamers, Activision's Call of Duty franchise brings its powerful combat and period authenticity to the GCN with Finest Hour, an all-new campaign that follows the stories of six Russian, American and British soldiers on three fronts. Succeeding both as a first-person shooter and as a great war story, the game throws you into one thrilling situation after the next, each mission offering something new: a run through Stalingrad in search of enemy machine gunners, a timed standoff in a sniper position while German soldiers charge on two sides, raids in North Africa and tank battles in Belgium. Although the adventure has plenty of video-game trappings (weapons and health packs in strategic locations, and a clear map display that shows you where to go), the dark settings, challenging situations and smart soldiers on both sides of the conflict make the battles feel very real.

Vehicle combat is new to the series, and it is as well-tuned as the title's other varieties of gameplay. Sweeping music adds a cinematic feeling of importance, and the stylized graphics establish a gritty and serious tone.

COMMENTS: Alan—If you're looking for something new and different, turn elsewhere, but if you just want to plug some Nazis, this game fits the bill nicely. Steven—Call of Duty brings life to the tiring WWII action genre by focusing more on the overwhelming harsh drama of war. As scores of troops fall around you, your contribution seems so much more important (and daunting).



- Activision
- 1 player

5

ALAN
CHRIS
GEORGE
STEVE
STEVEN

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

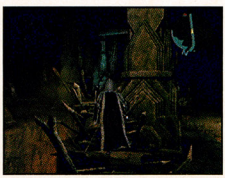
THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE

EA's sword-slashing series takes a new direction for its third adventure.

There's no denying the power of the Lord of the Rings franchise. The 800-pound gorilla has stomped through the gaming landscape with two megapopular play-the-movie-style console titles. Now, for an encore, EA turns to a straight-up turn-based RPG formula that offers a new spin on the classic trilogy, and different principle characters. Favorites such as Gandalf and Gimli still make appearances, and they are still voiced by the movie actors, but the game centers on fighters who didn't appear in the books or films.

As you guide your party across the forests and fields of Middle-earth, you engage in both random and scripted enemy encounters, some of which mirror famous battles from the trilogy, such as the assault on Helm's Deep. The skirmishes are artfully crafted and the control scheme is easy to understand, but the game is a by-the-numbers RPG that doesn't bring much new to the genre, except for the power of The Lord of the Rings.

Your victories on behalf of the good guys unlock Evil mode missions, in which you can fight on the side of Sauron. You also unlock cinema scenes that show film footage with new narration.



COMMENTS: Steven—It's excellent as a delivery device for splendid new dialogue from Sir Ian McKellen, and you can't beat that awesome Balrog, but for what it is—a linear RPG—its challenge level isn't what it should be. Steve— The Tolkien purist in me has a problem with the liberties EA has taken with the story, but The Third Age is a well-produced, if slightly generic, RPG. Chris—It's like living the Lord of the Rings saga with the characters replaced with their second cousins.

- EA
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously
- 2 discs

10

ALAN
CHRIS
JESSICA
STEVE
STEVEN

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

FINAL FANTASY I & II: DAWN OF SOULS

New graphics, sound and extras revitalize a pair of old-school RPG gems.

- Nintendo/128 Megabits
- 1 player

Square's Final Fantasy series carved out a strong RPG niche with its exceptional gameplay and storytelling when it debuted on the NES in 1990. Now, the first two titles in the FF series (the second of which was not originally released stateside) have undergone a graphic face lift, received new orchestral music and, most importantly, been augmented with all-new bonus sections that were not part of last year's PS One reissue.

Final Fantasy is pure, classic role-playing with random enemy encounters, turned-based battles and a story of four fighters on a mission to restore life to their planet. By defeating each of the Four Fiends, underlings of main villain Chaos, the heroes open four never-before-seen caves that contain boss monsters from other games in the series.

Final Fantasy II is more sophisticated in the way that it lets you build up the members of your party and in its more complex story, but it's still very accessible for RPG newcomers. After completing the original story, you are treated to a plotline that continues the adventures of your downed comrades.

At a time in which reissues are a trend, it's refreshing to see such an expertly remade pair of epics that don't rest on their laurels, but rather improve with age.

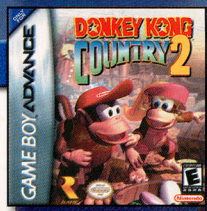
COMMENTS: **Steve**—New gamers weaned on modern RPGs might have trouble looking past the simplicity of these classics, but they stand the test of time remarkably well, boosted by a host of additions and a visual makeover. **Chris**—The value in having two classic RPGs in one pak is astronomical. Combined, the games are worth 80 hours of play time. **Steven**—Though rough around the edges, the two-in-one pak is an extraordinary value and a great opportunity for gamers to play through two seminal RPGs.

CHRIS	4.5
GEORGE	5
JESSICA	4
STEVE	4
STEVEN	5

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Fantasy Violence
Language

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2

Primates and reptiles rumble in a loaded version of a Super NES megahit.

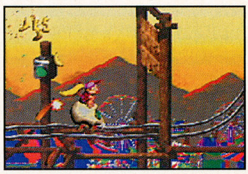


- Nintendo/64 Megabits
- 1 to 4 players
- Multi-Pak Game Link

One of the most popular franchises in the history of the Super NES continues its takeover of the GBA with an eight-world, 40-level romp starring Diddy Kong and Dixie Kong. With its signature 3-D prerendered graphics, Donkey Kong Country 2 delivers a beautiful platforming experience chock-full of flashy special effects and tricky jumps. If you're unable to progress on your own, you can enlist seven animal helpers for support. Rambi the Rhino breaks through barriers, for example, while Rattly the Rattlesnake allows you to reach new heights with a coiled bounce.

As was the case with the GBA reissue of Donkey Kong Country, the portable version of the sequel showcases new content in the form of three bonus games. Expresso's Racing allows up to four linked DKC2 fans to race ostriches, and Funky's Flight has players zipping through rings in a helicopter. Both events take place in seven environments, which you can unlock by playing through the adventure. A third bonus—Bag a Bug—is a single-screen bug hunt that's fun, but very simple.

The big draw for the DKC series in the mid-'90s was its advanced graphic style, which has since been surpassed by games that have more 3-D flourishes, but DKC2 remains a top-tier action title that proves to be quite difficult in its late stages. The extras and GBA portability give you reason to check it out, even if you're an old hand at the original version.



COMMENTS: **Steven**—Its graphics look a little dated, but it changes up environments often and stashes tons of secrets—a good romp for platforming fans. **Alan**—I found this game really tedious on the Super NES, and it hasn't changed much in the GBA version.

ALAN	3.5
CHRIS	4
GEORGE	3.5
STEVE	3.5
STEVEN	4.5

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

ALIEN HOMINID

- 0~3 (8)
- 1 to 4 players simultaneously

TEEN T — Blood and Gore, Cartoon Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

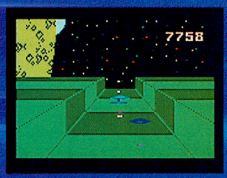
An Internet phenomenon since 2002, developer The Behomoth's Alien Hominid is now a full-blown 2-D platformer for the GCN. It's easy to see why the game's prototype has reached six million fans. The cute but vicious lead character zaps and slices big-shouldered evil FBI agents with animated pizazz, and the game moves along at a fast pace. A slate of 14 unlockable minigames gives you a break from the adrenaline-infused action.

ALAN	★★★★
GEORGE	★★★
JESSICA	★★★½
STEVE	★★★½
STEVEN	★★★½

INTELLIVISION LIVES!

- Crave (2)
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously

EVERYONE E — Gambling — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB



Video-game nostalgia is hit and miss. There are true classics, and there are games that you may have fond memories of but that don't withstand the test of time. Not only are the 60 early-'80s titles in Crave's Intellivision collection mostly forgettable, but their translation to the GCN is extremely rough. Designed for a keypad-equipped Controller, the games are almost unplayable after their configuration to the GCN Controller—it's a frustrating experience.

ALAN	★½
CHRIS	★★★
GEORGE	★½
STEVE	★★
STEVEN	★★

KING ARTHUR

- Konami (1)
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously

TEEN T — Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

If you've played EA's first two The Lord of the Rings console titles, Konami's King Arthur will trigger serious déjà vu. Like the LOTR games, King Arthur transitions seamlessly from movie footage to in-game cut scenes and offers film-inspired battles for either one player or two cooperative players. King Arthur adds escort missions and combat on horseback, but it doesn't have the polish and unlockable extras of the LOTR games.

CHRIS	★★½
GEORGE	★★★
JESSICA	★★★
SCOTT	★★½
STEVE	★★½

MARIO POWER TENNIS

- Nintendo (3)
- 1 to 4 players simultaneously

EVERYONE E — Mild Cartoon Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Powerful Donkey Kong fires himself from a cannon while spirited Boo turns into a wall of ghosts in a demonstration of Mario Power Tennis's crazy take on the sport. With 14 Mushroom Kingdom characters to choose from, tournament play and a handful of Gimmick courts, the game is big fun. The initial abbreviated matches against CPU-controlled swingers may seem too easy, but the game ramps up in difficulty at a steady pace.

CHRIS	★★★½
GEORGE	★★★★
SCOTT	★★★★
STEVE	★★★
STEVEN	★★★★

THE POLAR EXPRESS

- THQ (2)
- 1 player

EVERYONE E — Mild Fantasy Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Food fights, tennis trials and ski runs all play a part in your attempt to ride the Polar Express to the North Pole. The GCN *Polar Express* film adaptation interweaves large sections of the movie plot with fun but somewhat difficult-to-manage activities that are made more difficult by sluggish controls. The graphics are rich (close to matching the quality of the disc's numerous film scenes) and the game's quick pacing ensures that you'll never be bored.

ALAN	★★
CHRIS	★★½
GEORGE	★★★
JESSICA	★★★★
STEVEN	★★★

SPYRO: A HERO'S TAIL

- VU Games (20)
- 1 player

EVERYONE E — Cartoon Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Dark Gems are draining life from the Dragon Realms, and purple fire-breather Spyro is on the case to destroy them in a cheerfully vibrant 3-D platformer. As you set off on innumerable item quests with Spyro or one of four sidekick characters, you use a large selection of moves to navigate the environment and defeat enemies. Although the game doesn't offer anything new to the genre, it's well-made. It's got great control and lots of zany action.

CHRIS	★★½
GEORGE	★★★½
SCOTT	★★½
STEVE	★★★
STEVEN	★★★½

THE URBZ: SIMS IN THE CITY

- EA
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously

TEEN — Crude Humor, Sexual Themes, Violence

As is the case in real life, activities in The Urbz: Sims in the City range from fun to mundane. It's fun to socialize with other Urbz in the game's nine districts and to participate in minigame-like activities to earn cash and respect. It can be taxing, however, to maintain your Urbz's hygiene or the character's need for entertainment when a toilet, sink or TV are nowhere to be found. Hip music and colorful art give the game a stylish atmosphere.

CHRIS ★★★
GEORGE ★★★½
JESSICA ★★★★
SCOTT ★★★½
STEVEN ★★★★

CODENAME KIDS NEXT DOOR—OPERATION S.O.D.A.

- Global Star Software/64 Megabits
- 1 player

EVERYONE — Cartoon Violence

Colorful graphics that fit with the look of the *KND* cartoon add flavor to standard platforming fare in the quintet's first GBA title. You guide each of the KND agents through missions that are tailored to their abilities and gadgets. Numbuh 1 flies and zaps airborne enemies, for example, while Numbuh 5 jumps and moves like a ninja. Control is responsive, and the difficulty level ranges from easy to moderate.

CHRIS ★★½
GEORGE ★★★
JESSICA ★★½
SCOTT ★★★
STEVEN ★★½

DEAD TO RIGHTS

- Destination/64 Megabits
- 1 player

TEEN — Violence

Namco's acclaimed console shooter translates to the GBA as a 10-mission isometric-view action title with tight pacing, great sound and easily readable graphics. The intent of the auto-aiming feature is to make gunplay manageable, but clunky control ensures that the bad guys always get the first shot. Antihero Jack Slate's noir-style story is told with cheesy writing that will delight some, but make others cringe.

ALAN ★★½
CHRIS ★★½
GEORGE ★★★½
STEVE ★★
STEVEN ★★½

DUEL MASTERS: KAIJUDO SHOWDOWN

- Atari/64 Megabits
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously
- Multi-Pak Game Link

EVERYONE — Fantasy Violence

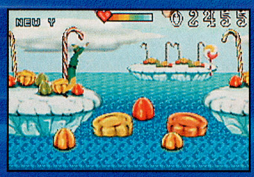
Wizards of the Coast's Duel Masters, a close cousin to Magic: the Gathering, continues its trading-card-game and TV-show tie-ins with a second GBA title that incorporates cards from two expansion sets: Evo-Crushinators of Doom and Rampage of the Super Warriors. A tutorial lets you in on the game's nuances, and numerous tournaments provide chances for you to win the game's 300 cards—a good spin for duelists.

CHRIS ★½
GEORGE ★★★½
JESSICA ★★★
SCOTT ★★½
STEVE ★½

ELF

- Crave/32 Megabits
- 1 player

EVERYONE



Although Will Ferrell's gawkiness does come through in the character animation, most of *Elf*'s comedy is lost in its platform-game adaptation. Levels that take place in the North Pole and in New York City have you jumping over pits and avoiding falling objects while venturing from point A to point B. The extremely simple gameplay will appeal to young fans of the film but will not test more-seasoned action gamers.

CHRIS ★½
GEORGE ★★
JESSICA ★½
STEVE ★
STEVEN ★★

FEAR FACTOR UNLEASHED

- Hip Interactive/64 Megabits
- 1 to 6 players alternating

TEEN — Mild Violence

A dozen daredevil events, including a pair of bug-eating contests, are randomly selected in Hip's six-contestant Fear Factor showdown. Activities range from lock-picking exercises to jumping and ducking trials, each displaying a Fear Meter that you must balance as you play. Whether you compete with your friends or play by yourself, you must watch all five of your rivals take turns, which accounts for a lot of downtime.

ALAN ★★
CHRIS ★★
GEORGE ★★
SCOTT ★★
STEVEN ★★

IT'S MR. PANTS

- THQ/32 Megabits
- 1 player

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Illustrations that are just a tad more sophisticated than stick figures, and a character who is painted in very broad British-comic strokes frame THQ's shape-matching puzzle game. Developed by Rare, It's Mr. Pants asks you to complete rectangles of unified colors with a set number of Tetris-style pieces. The puzzles are incredibly easy at first, but they grow in complexity at a good clip. It's odd, tricky and funny.

ALAN ★★★½
CHRIS ★★★½
GEORGE ★★★½
JESSICA ★★★
STEVEN ★★★★

LEGO KNIGHTS' KINGDOM

- THQ/32 Megabits
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously
- Multi-Pak Game Link

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Fantasy Violence

Built for beginners, Lego Knights' Kingdom is a very simple armored-battle adventure in which you must guide five characters (one at a time) through dungeons and fields. The characters are identical (except for the look of their armor), and the puzzles are strictly lock-and-key-finding exercises. Bonus tournaments pit linked players against each other in two kinds of direct combat and balance-testing jousts.

CHRIS ★★½
GEORGE ★★★
JESSICA ★★½
SCOTT ★★★½
STEVE ★½

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE

- EA/128 Megabits
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously
- Multi-Pak Game Link

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Blood, Mild Violence

Straight from the soundtrack of the *Lord of the Rings* films, the sweeping title theme sets the mood perfectly for an excellent tactics-style game. Selecting from the Light side or the Evil side of the conflict, you position major players from Tolkien's epic, as well as new characters, and engage in turn-based combat. Upgrades, such as Gandalf's Blinding Light command, are character-specific, and the story is very engaging.

ALAN ★★★★
CHRIS ★★★½
GEORGE ★★★★
SCOTT ★★★★½
STEVEN ★★★★

NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND 2

- EA/64 Megabits
- 1 to 2 players simultaneously
- Multi-Pak Game Link

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Going underground for a second street-racing session, EA's Need for Speed series screams with 18 real-life autos and 45 driving events in four big urban areas. The frame-rate is smooth and the environments are nicely detailed, but, as was the case in previous GBA NFS incarnations, it's hard to discern the legitimate path from the dead ends. Drag races, drift races and four types of car-tuning minigames add to the variety.

CHRIS ★★★
GEORGE ★★★
SCOTT ★★★
STEVE ★★
STEVEN ★★★

THE POLAR EXPRESS

- THQ/32 Megabits
- 1 player

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Rich graphics and smooth animation give the GBA version of *The Polar Express* a beautiful look that's perfect for the train-ride-to-the-North-Pole story. Most of the levels are simple platforming tests that have you searching for tree ornaments and candy canes, but a few choice action-oriented levels let you ski on the train's roof or steer the locomotive through danger. It's a good play for fans of the film.

ALAN ★★★½
CHRIS ★★½
GEORGE ★★★½
JESSICA ★★★½
STEVEN ★★★

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER 2: BUSH RESCUE

- EA/64 Megabits
- 1 player

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Cartoon Violence

EA's likeable Aussie hero joins the GBA platforming field with a versatile undertaking that allows you to select your path through the game's 2-D side-scrolling levels. You use the cash you claim for defeating Boss Cass's lizardlike mates to purchase boomerangs and mechanoid Bunyips—more power for bad-guy battling. The level design isn't particularly creative, but the overall game is lightly humorous, action-packed fun.

CHRIS ★★
GEORGE ★★★
JESSICA ★★½
STEVE ★★½
STEVEN ★★★½

THE URBZ: SIMS IN THE CITY

- EA/256 Megabits
- 1 to 4 players simultaneously
- Multi-Pak Game Link

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Crude Humor
Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes

A strong mix of character maintenance tasks and story-related missions make the GBA's The Urbz an engaging play. The early part of the game, in which you must find a place to live, is a little scattered. But once you establish yourself and complete the first of five chapters, it flows at a good pace. It's a game that you can sample for a few minutes while you're waiting for a bus or dive into for hours at a time.

CHRIS ★★★★
GEORGE ★★★★
JESSICA ★★★★
SCOTT ★★★½
STEVEN ★★★★

WWE SURVIVOR SERIES

- THQ/32 Megabits
- 1 to 4 players simultaneously
- Multi-Pak Game Link

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence

A strong concept that has you fighting for popularity and title bouts on WWE programs *Raw* and *Smackdown* leads to an extremely stripped-down wrestling exercise with slow control and severely limited moves. You can select from eight grapplers on each show (among them Kane and John Cena), and participate in several WWE events—WrestleMania among them. But it boils down to a monotonous and unsatisfying experience.

ALAN ★★½
CHRIS ★★
GEORGE ★½
STEVE ★½
STEVEN ★★★

YU YU HAKUSHO: TOURNAMENT TACTICS

- Atari/64 Megabits
- 1 player

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Fantasy Violence

Over the last year, the GBA has been host to several well-tuned strategic tactics titles, such as Fire Emblem and this month's The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age (see the review on page 140). Yu Yu Hakusho: Tournament Tactics attempts to live up to the competition, but it fails by being overly simplistic and by requiring very little in the way of actual tactics as you guide your characters into battle.

CHRIS ★★★
GEORGE ★½
JESSICA ★½
SCOTT ★★½
STEVE ★½

KEY

GCN
GBA
7 NUMBER OF MEMORY CARD BLOCKS REQUIRED

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CRITICAL MASS

To describe their unique, personal tastes, each of NP's critics has ranked 10 game genres in order of preference, with the favorite game type appearing first.

ALAN:
CHRIS:
GEORGE:
JESSICA:
SCOTT:
STEVE:
STEVEN:

ESRB RATINGS

The Entertainment Software Rating Board evaluates each game's content and assigns one of the following ratings to reflect the appropriate age group for the game.

EARLY CHILDHOOD — Early Childhood
TEEN — Teen (13+)
ADULTS ONLY 18+ — Adult (18+)
EVERYONE — Everyone
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VOLUME 187 — JANUARY 2005

BACK ISSUES

Nintendo Power issues are available individually. Features in each issue are listed below. Use the Back Issue/Player's Guide Order Form in this issue to order past Nintendo Power issues and books, or call our consumer service department at 1-800-255-3700 to order by phone with Visa or MasterCard.

Volume 186 (Dec. '04)
Metroid Prime 2 Echoes Preview, X-Men Legends, Def Jam: Fight for NY, Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door, F-Zero—GP Legend, Tony Hawk's Underground 2: World Destruction Tour, Grand Theft Auto: Advance, Kirby & The Amazing Mirror, Classic NES Series, Nintendo DS Preview, Viewtiful Joe 2 Preview, Prince of Persia: Warrior Within Preview, Mario Power Tennis Preview, Baten Kaitos: Eternal Wings and the Lost Ocean Preview, Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories Preview, GBA Video Preview, Final Fantasy I & II: Dawn of Souls Preview, Custom Robo Comic.

Volume 183 (Sep. '04)
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Volume 185 (Nov. '04)
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Volume 182 (Aug. '04)
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Volume 181 (Jul. '04)
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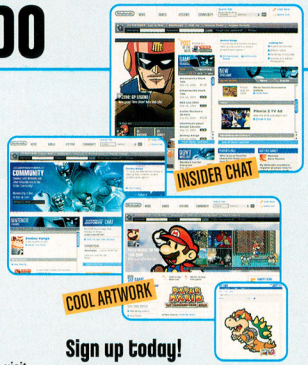

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The Legend Returns

The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap

In next month's issue, we'll take a closer look at the first-ever all-new Zelda title on the Game Boy Advance. We'll reveal some of the new weapons at Link's disposal, and examine the ties to the Four Swords story.

Fox Tale

Star Fox returns to the GCN with an epic space opus. We'll have a full hands-on report next month.

Star Fox: Assault

2005 Preview

We'll also uncover next year's hottest titles for the GCN, GBA and DS in our special 2005 preview feature.

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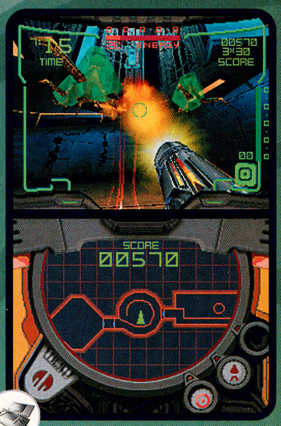

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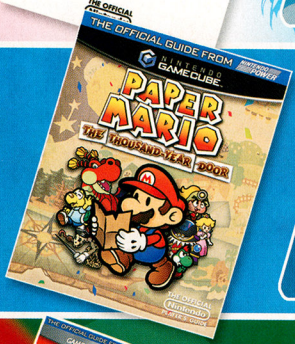

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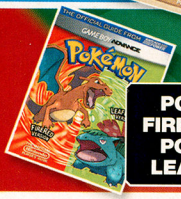

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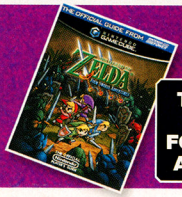

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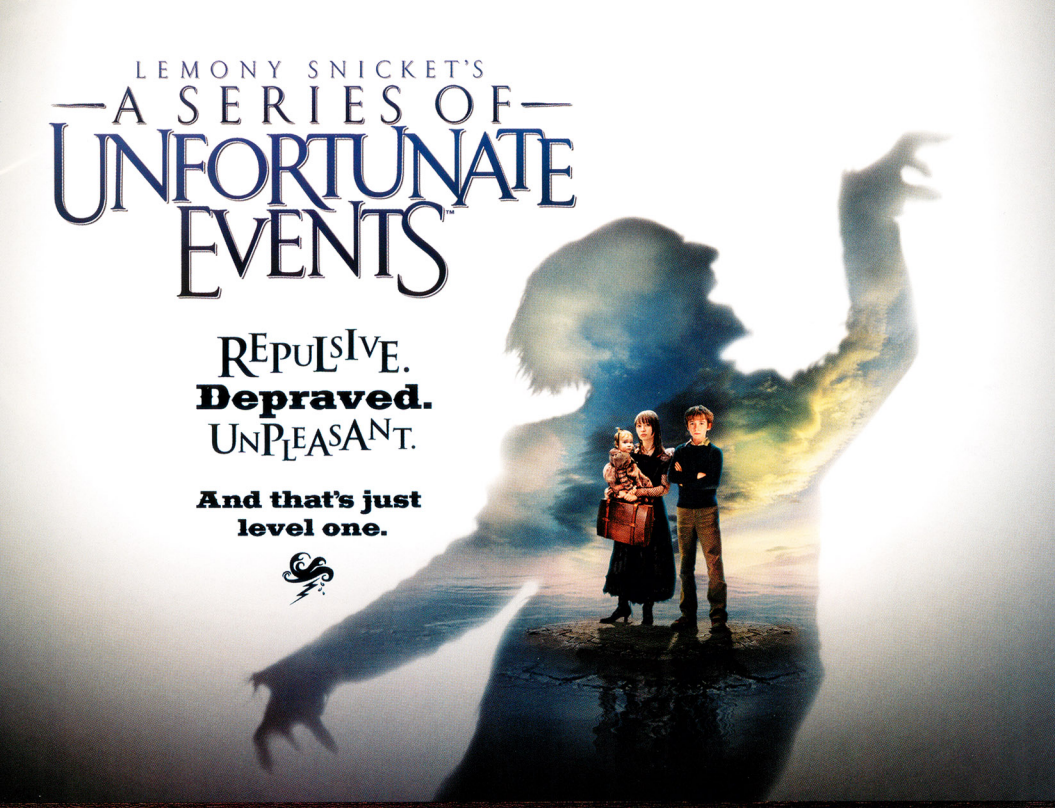

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